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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

The submarine, on which Germany now stakes everything recklessly, represents the most serious and effective side of German warfare to-day. What amount of these vessels has been lost or captured by us is not revealed—nothing definite has been heard, for instance, of the much-vaunted "Bremen" which did not reach America with its valuable cargo—but the daily tale of lost ships is sufficient evidence of the enemy's continued activity. Their submarines are bigger and swifter than they were early in the war.

It is obvious that special efforts are being made to defeat this menace, and on Monday the State Department of Washington published information from our Government concerning an area in the North Sea "dangerous to shipping". Neutrals, in accordance with the Hague Convention of 1907, have been notified concerning its extent. The outer line of this mine area runs from four miles off the coast of Jutland due west, and then south-west across the North Sea and Dogger Bank to within a few miles of the Yorkshire coast. Thence on the lower side, at an acute angle, it reaches within a few miles of the Dutch coast, near the Frisian Islands. The measures thus taken to check the enemy's operations are quite in accordance with international law, and should have a substantial effect.

In one case, at least, firmness has been too much for frightfulness. A Danish captain had his steamer stopped by a submarine, his papers were inspected, and he was ordered to get his crew into the boats. As a neutral sailing from one neutral country to another with no contraband on board, he explained that his ship might be sunk, but that he and his men would not leave it. He stuck to his resolution, and his ship went on its way.

On Tuesday it was announced that the auxiliary cruiser "Laurentic" has been sunk on the 25th off the Irish coast by a mine or a submarine. Later a mine was definitely stated to be the source of the disaster.

One hundred and twenty-one were saved out of a crew of 475, many lives being lost by the explosion.

On Wednesday night a still more desperate policy of ruthlessness at sea was announced by the German Government. Our hospital ships on the Channel routes are to be treated as warships, on the ground that they have often been misused for the transport of munitions and troops. From Thursday last neutrals are to expect "unrestricted naval warfare". It was not markedly restricted before, but now all vessels within new barred zones are to be sunk without a pretence of legal right. This news has put America into a ferment.

It is a mistake to suppose that on the Somme front the bitter weather has reduced operations to a standstill. Our men have lately carried out several successful raids, and on Saturday they secured a considerable gain, improving our line, by a brilliant coup near Transloy. They took all the objectives aimed at, and over 350 prisoners. The picked German forces, to which they were opposed, were taken by surprise. The airmen and anti-aircraft gunners of the Allies are also in exceptional form. Last week was a black week for German machines; our men destroyed no fewer than twenty-two, and the French in the same period twenty-seven. With thirteen driven down damaged and one captured, the total reached sixty-three enemy losses!

The offensive against Kut is making excellent advance. The attack, which began on 25 January, has now put our forces in complete possession of the Turkish first and second lines south-west of Kut-el-Amara on the right bank of the Tigris, on a front of over two miles, and the enemy's third and fourth lines are also held on a front of 600 yards; 950 Turkish dead have already been counted. The German tactics of holding the first trenches lightly and relying on counter-attacks have led to heavy losses.

On the Roumanian front the Germans are being held, and more than held. The Russo-Roumanian forces offer a solid array, and the Russian report of last

Sunday speaks of breaking through the enemy's positions after a stubborn fight on a front of 3,000 yards. The enemy appears to have decided to withdraw some divisions from this front, as all his efforts are checked with losses. On Saturday, in Southern Bukovina, the Russian troops carried, in spite of elaborate defences, the whole line of the enemy over a front of two miles; over 1,000 prisoners were secured. On the Riga front there has been stubborn fighting of late. The Germans have made a small advance, but in a number of previous attacks they were beaten back with heavy losses.

Wonder is often expressed at the way in which Germany finds the man-power for her armies and industries to-day. How is she doing it far into the third year of the war despite casualties of perhaps four millions? The answer is, largely, to be sought in the mass levy of all German men between 18 and 60. That saved the situation as regards man-power for the enemy, and has given him unfortunately a new lease of life in this matter. It is surprising that so little notice has been taken in this country of the mass levy. It was, there is really not the least doubt, a master-stroke by Hindenburg. It was not so flashy and sensational as his Roumanian meteoric campaign, but it may prove far more substantial and lasting. The details of that civilian man-power scheme have appeared in many German newspapers, but next to no notice has been taken of them in England.

The Hindenburg mass levy is clearly not unpopular in Germany. Every male in Germany between 18 and 60 years of age can be compelled—and thus naturally no one feels forced or driven severely; and there is the willing disposition to conform to the scheme that there is to conform to any other necessary and universal law by which States exist. The whole mass levy, as the details show, was worked out beforehand with care and precision—a most formidable and masterful stroke of war, we are sorry to say. Under this German scheme, though every man is bound by the law, the women are left free to act as volunteers. We very much wish the enemy had fumbled and feared, and finally broken down over his mass levy; or that he had tried to introduce it by instalments and odds and ends; but he has done nothing of the kind, a fact we must face. The mass levy by its thoroughness, fearlessness, and therefore by its acceptance without demur, has been a great stroke by Germany. We hope that Mr. Neville Chamberlain, who is now getting into the details of his scheme, will score a success. His choice of Mrs. H. J. Tennant and Miss Violet Markham as Director and Assistant Director of the Women's Department introduces two well-tried and competent hands.

Far too much attention is being paid by many people in this country to the endless stories about the alleged Austrian debacle. Last week, for instance, we were assured that Vienna and various other large towns in Austria and Hungary had been quite without bread for five days. Now if Austria can live without bread, without meat, the question naturally suggests itself: "On what is Austria living?" It can scarcely be by military glory and pride, for she no longer commands her own armies. Is she living by milk? Scarcely, for by various accounts she has long since run short of fodder for her cows. Nor can she be living through poultry, unless the fowls are far more prolific there than in Germany. But the truth must be that these stories of five-day fasts in Vienna and other Austrian towns are highly exaggerated. There is an irresistible inclination to believe and represent as true in such matters that which we desire to be true.

The inclination obtains in Germany and Austria no less than here. Mr. Prothero's statement that the British Isles are "a beleaguered city" will be regarded by over-sanguine people in enemy countries as a sign that we are near the final stage of exhaustion here, and are near to eating our last cat. So also the

incitements to raid the house sparrows' nests and to shoot the sitting wood-pigeons next spring will be regarded as the last straw of the eggless Englishman. It may be urged that, as both sides make the same error, no particular harm is caused by our visualizing the Austrians to-day as living on air—the result being a sort of "draw" in exaggeration. Nevertheless the safer way is to overrate, not to underrate, the lasting power of your enemy. The lasting powers of both Austria and of Germany have been persistently underrated by great numbers of people here since 4 August 1914. They are like that Cabinet Minister who remarked to General Smith-Dorrien before the struggle began that the Germans would run away if they ever went to war, being cowards.

Affairs in Greece seem at last to be reaching a satisfactory and quiet settlement. The flags of the Allies were saluted last Monday, the imprisoned Venizelists have been released, the Reservists have been disbanded, and it is officially stated that they no longer have any arms, having returned them to the military authorities.

Mr. Bonar Law's reply last week at Bristol to Mr. Wilson was quiet and dignified. The questions of private duelling and public war which he referred to, passingly, should be carefully discriminated. Duelling has gone out; it had its merits: it helped to deter men from vile aspersions on character: it put a curb on the tongue. But it had grave demerits, encouraging, for example, the skilled bully. Duelling has gone. But there is virtually nothing in common between the fashion, the vogue of duels among individuals and the world-old habit of war among nations. The first was purely artificial. It was smart, stylish, "the thing": the second, alas, has always been natural! Man is not born a duellist any more than he is born a milliner. Man is born combative or competitive. It is futile to hide this, and to pretend that it is wicked to represent man as combative or competitive. The spirit of competition and the spirit of combat are one and the same, both leading infinitely often to cruel ills and suffering, and both, we fear, being essential to the continuance of life on the earth. They appear to answer to motion and heat, without both of which our earth would become lifeless.

There is a dreamy kind of Socialist or a Socialistic kind of dreamer who quite honestly denies this and asserts that we can and shall get clean rid of all the spirit of competition and rivalry between man and man and of competition and rivalry between nation and nation; and that we shall establish at long last an ideal brotherhood of man. We think that this will not be done, because to live anything resembling the full life yearned after by healthy men and women, the full life of progress, physical and spiritual, is largely to compete. Collectivists or Socialists compete among one another and among their opponents just as actively as individualists (i.e., non-Socialists) compete. Competition among nations will always obtain, as it will among men; and unhappily it sometimes takes the form of war. But it is certainly true that you can have a great deal of competition without its breaking into war. The United States are perhaps the most successfully competitive of all nations: yet they have avoided a dangerous war with great skill for a long time—the American and Spanish War twenty years or so ago being not particularly dangerous.

The report of Mr. Lowther's Conference on Electoral Reform is a remarkable bye-product of the political truce. We gather that the recommendations are unanimous except when it is otherwise stated, and if this is so each party has abandoned some of its most cherished cries. Six months' residence is to give every man a vote, all elections are to be held on one day and proportional representation is to be tried in large boroughs. "One vote, one value" is accepted as the principle of redistribution, but the cherished "one

man, one vote" is subjected to a valuable proviso, and we are heartily glad that University representation is maintained and extended. Anything that safeguards the educated minority in these days and "dilutes" our democratic suffrage is of high political value. We welcome the signs of respect for old England when we read that Oxford, Cambridge, and the City of London are each of them to return two members, and we welcome also the respect for young England shown by the giving of votes to sailors and soldiers. Female suffrage divided the Conference, but a majority favoured a tentative beginning. Age was treated as the most weighty qualification, and thirty was regarded as the term of discretion, though more prudent politicians stood out for thirty-five. Marriage is to be no disqualification for women. On the whole the Report is a promising sign that our politicians are prepared to abandon party shibboleths and consider even the franchise on its merits. When the hour for legislation arrives we shall see how far this conversion is permanent.

The Food Controller has decided that the Royal Commission on Wheat Supplies shall control the importation of rice for sale in the United Kingdom, and a strict censorship is to be maintained over holdings of rice and the freight employed in its transport. The Food Controller has also ordered a return of stocks of malt used in brewing beer, stocks of barley, and other information of the sort. All maltsters and malt dealers will have to fill up forms of their holdings.

A Conference is now being held in Petrograd which aims, like that at Rome, at an increase of energy and understanding between our Allies and ourselves. It includes representatives of France, Italy, Roumania, and this country. Lord Milner, who heads the British delegates, is well known as an exponent of a policy of thorough in the war.

On Wednesday afternoon London was startled by the sensational news that three women and a man had been charged at Derby with conspiring to murder Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Henderson. No details of the affair are yet available, but the prosecution is to be conducted, after the remand, by the Law Officers of the Crown.

It is agreeable to find the name of Brigadier-General F. G. Stone in the Army Honours List published last week. The men who have worked hard on the strenuous, and not always exciting, task of training our new Divisions deserve recognition; and Brigadier-General Stone has notably been one of these workers, both at home and in France. Many of his South African friends and comrades will be pleased at the honour paid to him.

The Minister of Education, speaking as the guest of the University of London Club last Monday, expressed his belief, we are glad to notice, in the autonomy of the English Universities, while he added a suggestion that they might do more to co-operate. The system of exchange Professors has chiefly been confined to America, and might be better known in this country. We welcome Mr. Fisher's ideas of a common scheme for attracting the students of the Dominions to advanced courses, and for the exchange of teachers. Such associations have been successful in the past, e.g., between Cambridge and Canada, and might well be extended. Students of the countries allied to us will also have to receive attention after the war. Mr. Fisher further dwelt on the importance of fostering what he called the discovery faculty, a wayward gift which was apt to be lost in the routine of examinations.

The Home Office has abandoned for the present the proposal for establishing a central censorship of the cinematograph. Mr. Herbert Samuel as Home Secre-

tary had ample reason in the increase of juvenile crime for putting forward the proposal, and we are sorry to see that it has not resulted in definite action. We hope that the local authorities will have the courage to exercise such powers as they possess under the Cinematograph Act of 1909, though the objections to films may not always be obvious to the local mind. There is far too much of the cult of the revolver still held up to daily admiration as the mark of manliness, and classical poetry with its story sentimentalised and distorted for the million is a poor sort of education. Yet it is the education which is most popular for young and old alike, and as such it deserves the consideration of judgments which are outside the influence of commerce.

Lord Cromer, who died on Monday last, was one of the greatest public servants of modern times, and had fairly earned the title of "The Maker of Modern Egypt". An excellent man of business, he learnt much as private secretary to Lord Northbrook in India. In Egypt he was singularly upright, sagacious, firm, and clear-headed as a ruler. He had vision and a practical sense of what was possible. He remained British in his outlook, and met the wiles of the Oriental the better because he did not attempt to Orientalise himself. Unlike his clever successor, he always maintained his dignity, a point which appealed to the natives. Resolutely ambitious in youth, he mellowed with the years, but he did not suffer easily an argument by way of opposition from subordinates. Men who came to him with the intention of imposing their own views by force of eloquence have been reduced to tears by his frigidity.

He was a man of sober habits and a fixed routine. Thus every day for years a boat put out from his garden at Kasr-ed-Dubbareh and brought back water from the Nile, where it is purest, of which he drank a glassful in the middle of the morning, believing it contributed to his health. He was a tremendously hard worker, and in leisure hours preferred his study and his home circle to Society at large, thereby offending European coteries, who thought that his avoidance meant contempt.

For Egyptians, during a whole generation, he was the greatest man on earth. To reach El Lûrd, as they called him, was the aim of all who had a legitimate grievance. He thoroughly appreciated the comical side of the Egyptian character, and used to speak of Egypt as the land of paradox. He was amused by the correspondence carried on for years between the late Grand Mufti with a no less learned Sheykh, which covered the vast field of Muslim erudition and Arabic etymology, on the question whether the ant which is mentioned once in the Koran, and gives its name to a Surâh, was male or female.

An instance of his administrative wisdom was his treatment of the agitation to curtail the freedom of the native Press, which was undoubtedly abused. Lord Cromer, while he ruled in Egypt, would not hear of such a move. He said that he had rather the Egyptians wrote such things than acted them; that, while the Press was free, it saved much expense in Secret Service, since the papers told him what his enemies were after; and that it was only by the use itself of freedom that people could shake down to sober use of it. Much serious trouble was thus spared which came later. Confronted once with a policy in which he did not believe, enunciated by one of his helpers, Cromer stared at him for a moment and then, with a pitying smile, pushed him gradually and gently out of the room with no other word than a repeated "My good man!" After his retirement he wrote the history of "Modern Egypt" and of "Abbas II.", and was busy contributing to the Press on Imperial subjects. Last year he gave a prize for Greek, and he enjoyed the possession of an excellent library.

LEADING ARTICLES.

NATIONAL SERVICE AND MR. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN.

THE problem of National Service, in which we are behind our enemies, has got beyond the usual first stage of big phrases, and the real difficulties are becoming clear. Those of our publicists who mistake impatience for decisiveness are showing a tendency to abuse Mr. Neville Chamberlain, but this is altogether unreasonable. If a man is called from Birmingham to London and set down in an empty hotel and asked to organise the nation, he cannot be expected to show the lightning speed of a conjurer. Mr. Joseph Chamberlain was called by the envoys from Mashonaland "the man who gets things through", but he was in the habit of preparing his schemes in detail before launching them on a world which was sometimes taken by surprise. We do not doubt that his son has already accomplished much preparatory work, and we sincerely hope he will not be hustled into propounding half-made plans in order to win a name for quickness. Let him neglect the lovers of lightning, and not act till his preparations are complete. We urge this the more willingly because we view with some misgivings the indications so far given of what is first going to be done.

It is said that the "mobilisation of the nation" is to be begun by a great call for voluntary workers. Now if there are two things which are incompatible, they are mobilisation and voluntarism. If anyone will try and realise for himself what it means to "mobilise" even a small trade—that is, to make employers not compete with one another, but pool their resources, and employed not choose their jobs, but take on their selected work—he will quickly perceive that without compulsion and the sanction of penalties, even the smallest mobilisation is impossible. However, our views on this general question have been expressed since the very beginning of the war, and events have justified them sufficiently. We do not wish to "queer the pitch" for Mr. Neville Chamberlain by any pre-judgment on abstract grounds, but we fear that if he is going to rely on voluntary recruiting he will achieve very disappointing results. What men are going to volunteer? How many men are there at the present time who are not working at something? It is unreasonable to expect men to desert their employers, even in unessential trades, simply because volunteers are asked for by posters and speeches. Moreover, a volunteer will expect to choose his own work, and there will be the old chaos and the old recruiting of men who can least be spared. Another feature of to-day is the great number of men who, in addition to their ordinary work, are "doing their bit" as volunteers or special constables or helpers in munitions and hospitals. The sum total of these "bits" is a very considerable item in the national activity, and the position of these men, most of them keen citizens, will be very difficult if they have to decide for themselves whether they ought to enroll under Mr. Neville Chamberlain. It will be difficult because no individual has the means of telling whether or not his normal work is the best he can render to the State. Only those in the centre of Government are within reach of the jealously guarded knowledge which is necessary to form a judgment on the actual needs of the nation. The individual citizen has not only a duty to obey, but also a right to be directed.

National service is another name for controlling and dislocating ordinary trade. We are no advocates for trade as against the needs of war, but it is childish not to realise that British wealth is a real necessity to the Allied cause, and that the increase in wealth must not be hampered more than is absolutely necessary. We believe that national control may even secure ultimately the production of wealth on an increased scale if it is scientifically directed; but trades which are "unessential" in war time are none the less often wealth-producing, and their temporary suspension

means a proportionate loss not only to individuals, but also to the nation. The first thing the Government has to decide is the real urgency of the national needs, because on the degree of urgency must depend the line drawn between essential and non-essential trades. Mr. Neville Chamberlain has told us that he is engaged on the difficult task of deciding what trades are non-essential, and he is clearly faced by a dilemma. He recognises that to brand any trade as non-essential is an evil to be avoided if possible, but he can only hope to secure any considerable number of men if he shuts down a number of trades. What "reservoirs" of men are available to him? Chiefly the luxury manufacturing, the shops and the distributing trades in towns, and in the country gardeners growing flowers instead of food, and the remaining grooms and game-keepers. All these "reservoirs" have been tapped by the Army, but no doubt there are still many men over military age to be secured. In addition, there are the "retireds" of the professional and middle classes. Probably the distributing trades may provide most men, as there is much overlapping in them: half-a-dozen dairymen will send their carts into one street, and the rival bakers and butchers and grocers do the same. Man power is wasted in this way, and it seems a reasonable proposition to force all the dairymen of a town to organise delivery of milk as the Post Office organises delivery of letters. Incidentally the dairyman might lose his goodwill, which depends entirely on the number of customers he has secured, and the question of compensation or of guaranteed profits would be raised. But there are two important points in all such reorganisations which we commend to Mr. Neville Chamberlain. In the first place, the authority of Government is essential or they will not be fairly carried out, and, in the second place, the trades themselves, subject to Government orders and supervision, should be allowed to do their own organising. Local councils are unsuitable, and the further multiplication of officials is the greatest danger Mr. Chamberlain has to face. We doubt if he will cull very many men from the countryside; but it ought to be possible to save labour in nurseries and flower-gardens and on the roads. The villages will do much better now that part-time work is to be accepted, as we are glad to note Mr. Prothero has decided, and useful help may be given by the "retireds", who may labour profitably for a few hours, but would assuredly collapse if they attempted the long, hard days of Hodge. We trust that the C3 men in the Army are not going to be given up by Mr. Prothero and Mr. Neville Chamberlain. Sir Douglas Haig is rightly insisting on a high physical standard for the men sent to France, and if men, who have been trained up to the drafting stage, are categorised as C3 by medical boards and are therefore proved valueless to Sir Douglas Haig, they should surely be promptly released and be available for such labour as Mr. Chamberlain may select for them. But the largest remaining "reservoir" is of women, and we are justified in believing that they can be of great service in agriculture. If Mr. Prothero is prepared to train them and to offer their labour in organised groups the conservative British farmer will be surprised to find how useful they will prove. It is of no use to offer labour to our farmers by circulars issued in London, or to tell them to make written application to some official body. They will muddle on with short labour rather than harass their minds with circulars and forms, but if the labour can be offered so that their eyes can see it they will sceptically try the experiment. Mr. Prothero will very quickly find that he cannot mobilise farm cultivation merely by making speeches and fixing prices. Lord Crawford publicly lamented that he had not the power to compel farmers to grow more wheat—a sorry confession, for which he was not to blame, after two years of war!—and Mr. Prothero will, we do not doubt, obtain and use this very necessary authority. It must be remembered that every woman trained in agriculture is a valuable asset for the future. She will be, if unmarried, a skilled mate for some colonist or farmer after the war, and this war will be

paid for ultimately by increased production at home and in the Colonies.

When Mr. Neville Chamberlain has secured his labour what is he going to do with it? We are all agreed that the Navy and Army are outside all rivalry, and that they must be supplied and fed. But only those in the centre can decide how far munitions and shipping and agriculture require, and can absorb, further labour. It is easy to say you cannot have too many shells, but the profitable allocation of further labour to munitions must be limited at some point by the plant and raw material available. Rapid transport by rail and motor is of the essence of this problem. As for the necessities of the food supply they are directly affected by the great unknown factor which makes the direction of national policy so difficult and complicated to-day. No one can as yet say what the real effects of the German submarines will be: if they prove really menacing the food question takes first place of all, and Mr. Neville Chamberlain will have to enlarge his list of non-essential trades in order to turn every possible man on to the land; if the Navy is successful against the new as it was against the old submarines, our food supplies and raw materials will be reasonably secure. But we must not "wait and see." The Admiralty has done well to extend its mine-field, and if this can be effectively defended—a dangerous task—we shall have made the use of their bases much more difficult for the German marauders. Naval effort must be seconded at home in every possible way, and if National Service becomes a scientific reality all skilled men taken from ship-building will be returned, and all rules that retard the completion of ships will be abrogated. The greatest defect of the late Government was that there was no co-ordination of the departments, and there are some signs that Mr. Neville Chamberlain, if he has a supply of labour, will find himself the prey of competing dictators. There will be no true National Service until the various departments have agreed among themselves on the extent and urgency of their respective needs. It was an excellent sign that Lord Derby and Mr. Prothero were able to issue a joint letter, and we hope to have further and better evidence that contentions between departments have become a thing of the past. If the rulers show unity and clearness of mind the nation will respond. We wish Mr. Neville Chamberlain success, but we beg him to believe that the people desire from him not appeals but directions, not exhortations but commands. The "Joe" of old days had a masterful way with him.

GERMAN DESIGNS IN AFRICA.

THE Allied Note to Washington, which covered the future of Europe, was silent as to the destiny of the German colonies. But the Germans have not been silent, and their newspapers, which insist that these territories shall be demanded back at the Peace, will be grieved by Mr. Long's statement that they will not be returned. There will be disappointment in Pan-German circles and rage among colonial enthusiasts; in Hamburg not even bulletins of victory in Roumania will quite compensate for the thought of capital and opportunity lost for ever in Africa.

Previous to the war the German colonial party, which must not be confused with those who were intoxicated by the high-sounding Berlin-Byzantium-Bagdad project, had settled down to business after some preliminary canters. They knew what they wanted in Africa, which was more apparently than we knew in Asia Minor; and to judge by statements made in Germany as to the agreement concluded just before the war between Britain and Germany for what was almost a new partition of Africa and the Middle East, they were in a fair way to get what they wanted. At least they professed themselves satisfied with the concessions, which doubtless means there was very little that was not conceded.

It is important to understand exactly what the German colonial party desired. They had practically given up the idea of founding a New Germany in temperate lands, partly because their only colony climatically suited for that purpose, German South-West Africa, would not carry a large population; partly because emigration had been discouraged for some years by the Imperial authorities. (The enormous emigration of Germans to foreign countries, which moved Treitschke's honest indignation, took place under Free Trade conditions; but industries grew so rapidly at home under the tariff that emigration dwindled year by year, and finally almost ceased.) The German colonial party therefore changed its aim. Men could no longer be exported, but money could, and money breeds as fast in a new country as human beings. There was an increasing demand throughout the civilised world for the raw materials grown in the tropics, prices were rising, the profits of grower and shipper were good; and it was therefore clear that it would be good business to found a great tropical Empire, ruled and financed by Germans, developed by native labour. The site, after some prefatory glances at Brazil—the wealthy beauty protected by the British Navy and the Monroe Doctrine—was fixed in Africa, where Germany already had colonies.

It was in the year 1911 that the new idea was first publicly discussed in Germany—after the Agadir crisis. Germany as a whole was dissatisfied with the upshot of that affair, but the colonial party was less dissatisfied than the rest, since it gave them a strip of important territory in the French Congo. The new boundary of the German Cameroons entirely enclosed the poor little Spanish colony of Muni, and Germany intended to purchase that now almost useless enclave from Madrid at a suitable time; but a more significant extension was the carrying of the German boundary to the Belgian Congo at Bonga. That acquisition was preparatory to the building of a railway between the Cameroon capital at Duala and Bonga, which would have led well into the interior, but a far larger policy was hidden behind the apparently innocent desire to bring a little railway to a great river. On the other side of the continent a railway was already building in German East Africa between the capital, Dar-es-Salaam, on the coast, and Ujiji, on Lake Tanganyika, in the interior; and it was intended to connect this by a long line through the Belgian Congo to the Cameroon railway with its terminus at Bonga.

Germany had no doubt that Belgium would agree to anything of the kind proposed by her overbearing neighbour, and the construction of the line could have been represented, and was in fact represented, as an advantage that Belgium would share equally with Germany. Berlin indeed had designs on the Belgian Congo as well as on Belgium itself, and if she had won her anticipated victory in the present war she would have claimed not only the French colonies—that indeed we know by her own admission—but the Belgian Congo, and have bound it to herself by the iron bondage of a trans-African railway which would have straddled the continent from east to west. (It was possibly calculated that Belgium would have been glad enough to give up the Congo as indemnity for any resistance offered to German troops on their way through Belgium to the campaign in France. In any event a pretext would not have been lacking, and Belgium would have been helpless.)

This ambitious policy, discussed in the German Press in 1911, was apparently expected to appeal to the German public as a grandiose scheme on similar lines, and likely to achieve similar results to the Bagdad Railway scheme. But the subject was a delicate one to handle; the German public was not attracted to the Congo as to Asia Minor and Mesopotamia, but was, on the contrary, extremely angry at the time with its Government for being beaten in argument by France; and some over-suspicious Germans, in their irritation after Agadir, were even inclined to suggest that the whole project of a trans-African railway was an evil design of the British to

seduce the guileless Teuton into sinking money and men on fruitless enterprises in the fever-haunted swamps of an unknown land. In these untoward circumstances, public mention of the scheme was dropped; but the scheme remained, a certain source of future trouble, and one which must as surely bring England and Germany into conflict in Central Africa as England and France came into conflict in North America in the eighteenth century. When one European Power expands northwards and southwards, and another expands eastwards and westwards, on the same continent, it is only the hour and the place of their collision that is doubtful. The collision itself is assured.

Now the object of raking up this ancient history of African ambition is this: that, though the Germans have lost their colonies, the colonial party retain their ambitions, and if these colonies are handed back to them they will again begin to work for an enlargement of their African territories at the expense of their neighbours, and every diplomatic difficulty which arises in Europe will again be complicated by a demand for more concessions in Africa. We have seen something of these methods in Morocco; the Central African question is less generally known, and our own Foreign Office has never announced the details of the agreement arrived at with Germany over this matter in the summer of 1914. But if, as has happened before at peace conferences, we are tempted to regard the colonial settlement as of little importance, and to restore the status quo, or even something like it, we shall be laying up trouble for ourselves in the near future. German designs in Africa were enough, as General Botha remarked two years ago, "to make one's hair stand on end", and those designs will revive unless the Germans are excluded root and branch from the continent. For all these almost forgotten historical considerations, we heartily welcome Mr. Long's definite statement that her African and other colonies will not be returned to Germany.

THE WAR'S CATCHWORDS AND CATCH- PHRASES.

ONE of the too exasperating incidents of the war, from an intellectual point of view, has been the catchword and the catchphrase. The Military Service Acts did certainly knock on the shallow pate a certain number of these thoughtless things. It knocked out the catchphrase that one free man is worth three to ten forced men. It also knocked out "the free and spontaneous uprising of a people". But, unfortunately, the campaign leading up to the first of these Acts, the euphemism of a sham voluntary system, exhilarated catchphrases to the effect that it was the duty of the young unmarried "slackers" to go and be bombed and bayoneted for the sake of the patriotic married man, who was to stay behind—an unsound and inhumane outcry.

Besides the death and burial of the pet No-Conscriptionist catchphrases and catchwords, other wearisome old offenders have tended to die out as the reality of the war has been brought home to people. The catchphrases about "democracy" have tended, on the whole, to disappear; we notice a slight resurrection of this culprit within the last week or so; but let us hope that, now it has been exhibited afresh for the edification of superstitious minds, this glib Greek word will be put away till the close of the war. Democracy was so incessantly repeated in empty harangues and empty articles in the early part of the war that it was almost enough, at times, to make one wish there had never been a Greece. The word "democracy" became a form of compulsory Greek for everyone who desired to speak or write something popular or imposing. It has tended to disappear from two causes. First, from sheer exhaustion, due to overwork; and, secondly, it seems to have been borne in on responsible persons that it might well be—and was—offensive to Russia to be always shouting in favour of democracy and to be making a long nose at autocracy. The Allies will not, and cannot, win this war without the aid of

Russia, so it is bad policy and blatant form to be "Yah, yahing!" against Russia's ancient and present system of government. We are not here arguing whether democracy or autocracy be the better way of government. There are many arguments against and in favour of both, and the whole question is undecided. Even assume, however, that democracy is the most efficient system, stretch a point and assume it the perfect system: it yet remains bad policy and blatant form to flaunt it in the face of Russia. Russia is a mighty Power, which has entered on this war from motives as unsullied as those of any of the Allies. Her people and their rulers are singularly inspired, despite internal difficulties, with a religious fervour and profound conviction. It may be remote and mystical to the British mind; but that does not prove it is not worthy of our deep respect. The wearisome repetition of the much abused Greek word may cater for some people, many people even, in one or two neutral countries who plume themselves on being, before everything, free and enlightened citizens of a great etc.; and it is true we should study to keep neutrals in a good cue. But let us not forget that flam about the triumph and glory of democracy is no more palatable to Russia, our indispensable Ally, than similar flam about the triumph and glory of autocracy would be to some of our nearer neighbours and friends. It will be well to put democracy, autocracy, aristocracy, and bureaucracy securely away till the close of the war, instead of indulging in boastful inanities about them. This war is not a by-election for the vacant seat at Little Peddlington. Street corner buffoonery and schoolboy essays are not helpful to-day.

Of the ludicrous catchphrase about this being "a war to end war" we need say nothing. That particular phrase, very catching here a year or two ago, seems to have crossed the Atlantic and is doing business elsewhere. Before it is done with some of our friends over there, who prefer thinking to vapouring, may wish it had been submarined on the way and deported to some region of perpetual peace.

The catchphrase of "We shall not lay down our arms, sir, till we have smashed for ever the spirit of militarism on the earth" has had its best day; though militarism (i.e., *miles*—"a soldier") still flourishes as a swear-word. At times we are all driven into using it for a deadly reproach, though, truth to tell, not even the most immilitarist of us can watch our own glorious men, or those of France, anywhere on the Western front, from Ypres to Switzerland, without admitting that splendid soldiery, splendid militarism, is there too. There was some militarism about that Twenty-Ninth Division—and about the men of Mons and Le Cateau too! There was some about the jolly, shouting, sweating braves who cheered the progress of the tank down the main street of Flers. There is some sign of militarism about the strapping fellows who are training to-day all over England at the game of bombing parties behind corrugated iron sheeting, and about the smart sergeant with his "Keep down your head!" Some sign of it, too, about the drill of the Grenadier Guards. That is a military spirit which will take a great deal of smashing for ever. We believe—and hope—it will never be done. Then why pretend that militarism or soldiery is in itself wicked? Why call that wicked which has secured England for a thousand years? Surely it is enough for us all to recognise that the German form of militarism is a vicious form, and that we have to quell it by inflicting a signal defeat on the Germans for the liberty and security of Europe and of ourselves.

THE GREAT WAR.

APPRECIATION (No. 131) BY BRIGADIER-GENERAL F. G. STONE.

MAN POWER AND SUBSTITUTION.

LAST week the machinery by which substitution was to be effected was discussed. It is proposed now to examine some of the fields in which substitution activity may produce substantial results by freeing men

who are fit for general service from their present occupations and enabling them to join the Army.

The recent communication from the War Office to the President of the Board of Agriculture, to the effect that it had been found necessary to call up half of those men engaged in agriculture to whom the Tribunals had refused certificates of exemption from military service, although subsequently modified, has already begun to test the machinery through which the services of Class C3 men may be engaged on a fairly comprehensive scale. It is quite unnecessary for farmers to start with the prejudice that all C3 men are "crocks". Speaking from personal knowledge of a good many C3 men, I know that the majority of cases are those of men who to the unprofessional eye appear perfectly fit, and who go about their daily work without any signs of "crockiness".

It is absolute nonsense to suppose that such men are physically or mentally incapable of becoming efficient farm hands in a very short space of time. We have trained quite as unpromising material in the Army, in which a far higher standard of specialised attainment is required, and as soon as the farmer finds that he must train new hands his difficulties will assume a much less menacing aspect. Flat feet, defective eyesight, many organic diseases in a more or less dormant stage, even occasional epileptic fits, do not disqualify men from hundreds of occupations, many of which may be of a really strenuous character, although such men are distinctly unfit or unsuitable for active service in the Army at the front. When I recall the numbers of extraordinarily unfit and unsuitable men who were passed wholesale into the Army in the days when it was considered necessary to prop up the tottering system of voluntary enlistment, even at the risk of indefinitely prolonging the war, I feel that I would gladly have accepted most of my C3 friends in substitution for the unfit men of 1914-15 whom I, and hundreds of other commanding officers, were moving heaven and earth to get rid of. When I say "unfit men", I mean unfit in the eyes of those who had to train them. They had, of course, been passed "fit" on attestation by medical officers who at that time were acting apparently under very different instructions from those which obtain now. It seems reasonable to infer that the physical standard of fitness in the men who are now being passed for general service is all that it should be, and that no time is being wasted at the various training centres in trying to make soldiers of men who are either mentally or physically deficient in those qualities which help to put the German hors de combat and keep themselves out of hospital—except for wounds.

There is a very strong feeling that a considerable amount of combing out still remains to be done in certain Government Departments, not excepting H.M. Dockyards; in fact, those who are in closest touch with the latter think that they might come first on the list, but it would require an independent Tribunal to do the work. It is not only that many men who are not desirous of being passed into the Army could easily be replaced by substitutes; there are also others who are doing all they know to get freed from their present employment, and who are fit for general service and anxious to join up, but are told that they cannot be spared from their work. I have a case of the latter kind before me at the present moment—a mechanic passed fit for general service, who says, "If I knew (and who has a better right to judge?) I was serving my country better where I am than on active service I would willingly stop where I am. . . . I am bound by 'red tape' to an occupation which could easily be done by women. In fact, a woman is not needed, as others, if they did a decent day's work, could easily perform six times as much as I do. Yet here, in the greatest crisis England has ever had, young men willing to go and do their duty are kept home here, 'killing time'."

Practically the same indictment is made by the Special Correspondent of the "Times" (13 January) against the private yards upon which, in addition to the requirements of the Navy, the building of our mercantile marine depends. He had before him the

"Agreement made 6 October 1916 between the Admiralty, the Ministry of Munitions, and the Board of Trade, and the Liverpool Shipwrights' Trade and Friendly Association, and the Liverpool District Committee of the Ship Constructors' and Shipwrights' Association, in regard to the organisation of labour", the first clause of which runs as follows: "Co-operative efforts will be made to increase production by the adoption of all practical expedients which tend to increase and maintain output, both as regards warships and as regards mercantile shipping, and other work certified by the Government to be work of national importance." "Unfortunately", writes the "Times" correspondent, "this agreement, if not an absolutely dead letter, appears to be the next nearest thing. Let me give an illustration:

"The agreement provides in so many words that all rules and customs which tend to restrict output shall be suspended for the period of the war. One such rule or custom established by the Shipwrights' Association in the days before the war restricts to a certain limit the amount of deck-caulking which shall be done for a certain price; in other words, no man is allowed to do more than 'a fair day's work for a fair day's pay'. This rule, I am told, has not been waived in practice, and if by any chance a man completes his allotted work, say, by 3 o'clock in the afternoon, he will stand idle for a couple of hours or so until the agreed time to cease work, although he is paid by time, and therefore receives wages for the wasted hours. When this is brought to the notice of the trade union officials their reply is: 'We are quite ready to give up this practice as we have given up others, provided that the men are paid more if they do more work. But we have never directly been asked to do it.'

"This is perhaps only a small instance of waste of labour, but it is not an isolated one. On the general question of the extent to which trade union customs and practices which tend to restrict output have actually been suspended in the shipbuilding and allied industries there is a complete conflict of opinion. Responsible leaders of the unions will invariably assert that their particular organisation gave up all its rules restricting output long ago. Employers, on the other hand, declare that they are still operative, though abandoned in theory. The fact probably lies somewhere between the two statements. What is tolerably certain is that the demarcation between kindred trades has not yet been entirely relaxed; that skilled operatives who might be better employed in work which they alone can do and for which the supply of labour is inadequate still insist on doing work which could be equally well done by men in another branch of trade in which there is a surplus of labour; and that the process of dilution, whether by skilled men from other trades or by semi-skilled and unskilled labour, including women labour, has not yet been carried to anything like the full extent which is practicable."

If, therefore, it is the case, either in H.M. Dockyards or in the private yards, that to some extent men are not being fully employed (i.e., men fit for general service) at work which does not admit of substitution, or that such men, although fully employed, are engaged in work which does admit of substitution, then it seems that the country can reasonably call on the yards for greater and more rapid output, or for the release of a number of men fit for general service, or for both. The difficulties in respect to mobilising labour where it is most required, as it affects the yards, are another question, and these difficulties are certainly no greater in the case of shipbuilding than they are in the case of the land.

The close preserve of the boot trade has been attacked, and Tribunals notified that men who are fit for General Service or for Garrison Service Abroad (B1) will no longer be regarded as being in a certified occupation; special provision is, however, made for foremen, who, if they are married men, will be taken for the Army up to the age of 27, and, if unmarried men, up to the age of 30.

One of the industries in which Tribunals would do well to allow absolutely no exemptions is the Piano industry and the trade connected with it. It makes one's blood boil to see men fit for National Service tuning pianos! We can get unfit men, or women, to tune pianos, or quite easily allow our pianos to remain untuned until the war is over. I have been informed by someone in the trade to whom I protested that "there never was such a boom in the piano sales"! A pity the money did not go into the War Loan.

This is borne out by the experience of my friend Mr. C. Grey, Editor of "The Aeroplane," who writes as follows:—

"The other day I was talking to a man in the piano trade, who told me that for many months past one of the big British piano firms has been selling 1,300 pianos a week at 40 guineas apiece in their depôts in three only of the big manufacturing cities in the North of England. That is to say, £50,000 worth of pianos a week, or at the rate of £2,500,000 worth per annum. I will not guarantee his figures, but he is not likely to be very far out.

"Now the piano maker is by his training a ready-made aeroplane maker, for he is used to combining the finest woodwork with high-class metalwork. So here you have the equivalent in man-power of at least another 2,000 aeroplanes, and probably 10,000 under proper organisation, being wasted in producing musical boxes for the profiteers in the North.

"And this country is supposed to be using its man-power to advantage. It sends skilled workmen almost past military age into the trenches, or rather into hospitals at the nation's expense, while it leaves thousands of men working at what are purely luxury trades."

It is impossible in an article like this to do more than touch the fringe of a vast subject, and to lift the veil here and there behind which enormous numbers of young men eligible for the Army or for some form of National Service have hitherto been hiding themselves.

MIDDLE ARTICLES.

AT THE FRONT.

By AN OFFICER IN KITCHENER'S ARMY.

VIII.—ON QUARTERMASTERS.

QUARTERMASTERS, like poets, are born, not made, and the same applies to quartermaster-sergeants. No man has ever seen a quartermaster in the process of growth. They burst upon an astonished and admiring world full-grown and full-armed, like Pallas from the head of Zeus. But careful enquiries in the lower ranks will reveal their origin. Notice that company clerk over there, with a head for figures and a clerky hand; already he can compile and keep the company pay sheet without error or erasure, no small feat in itself; already he has a prodigious memory for numbers and details of allotments and stoppages; surest sign of all, he calls a broom-handle, "Brooms, bass, handles for, one". And when a man once begins to talk like that nothing but a court-martial can alter his destiny. Quartermaster-sergeant to the eyes of the seer is writ large upon his youthful brow. From being company clerk he will become quartermaster-sergeant. In that capacity he will be in the chrysalis stage. He still has to go on, hat in hand, to the Q.M.S. of the Regiment, and will have to engage in brisk competition with those of his rank in the other companies. But already he will be developing the Olympian air of those who have favours—and stores—to dispense. You can see him daily issuing rations to his platoons, with a stern eye to a just division, and an uncanny memory of previous shortages to justify to-day's concession. But it is after a kit inspection that he is at his zenith. No man can be blamed for needing his day's rations. But it is a favourite theory in the Army that every man starts his career with a complete set of kit; this is open to question, but is not nearly so staggering an idea as the Q.M.S.'s second axiom, that no man ever loses any kit. When, therefore, a platoon sergeant approaches him with a long list of "Kit, deficient" his horror and indignation know no bounds, and he calls down the wrath of Heaven on the offender. That a man after wearing a shirt till it is past washing should then throw it away instead of treasuring it in his pack till such time as his kit is inspected, passes apparently the limits of probability, decency, and his experience. Never has there been such a regiment of wastrels. And the platoon sergeant is of necessity abashed; if, on the other hand, he is one of wisdom and resource he will, at least in barracks, keep a large and unsavoury bag for worn-out kit. After kit inspection he will find himself or his men deficient of, say, ten shirts. Search in the bag will reveal, say, five shirts, and these by dexterous tearing and cutting will become ten shirts, or shirts for replacement at least. For it is a curious feature of Army supply that they will give you anything, from a Tank to a tooth-

brush, provided that you pander to their sense of economy by bringing a worn-out article in place of the new one. The Q.M.S. will then write it down in his book as issued on replacement, and will be perfectly happy. In fact, any Q.M.S. who succeeded in doing this for a whole year without ever issuing an article to replace a deficiency would, it is generally believed, be taken direct to Olympus, where he surely belongs, in a chariot and horses of fire. What they do with the returned kit is a horrible mystery; whether they become "Rags, cleaning," or "Stationery, officers, for the use of," is unknown, but there are probably some people in Whitechapel who could tell if they would. The psychological point, why about fourteen square inches of dirty grey flannel should make a man willing to issue a new shirt, while its absence reduces him to profane swearing, is still, and must ever be, unsettled.

As is the platoon sergeant to the company Q.M.S., so is the latter to the Q.M.S. of the regiment; less abject perhaps, as one who has also been initiated into the mysteries of the profession, but still in the position of that economist's fiction, Demand, while his senior fills the rôle of Supply. Not that their relations are economic. Demand is loud and continuous, for as any quartermaster will tell you, there is no man yet made who will keep all his kit intact for twenty-four hours. Supply, on the other hand, so far from adapting himself to suit Demand, or anticipating his wants and being eager to satisfy them, is, so Demand says, casual, critical, and miserly. He doesn't care whether he obtains stores or not, and when he does get them he hoards them more jealously than ever miser hoarded gold. The true quartermaster will sit on a pile of blankets, with barrels of gum boots all round him and the floor covered with cardigans and socks, will look you perfectly straight in the eye, and say that there are no blankets, gum boots, cardigans, or shirts in store; what he means, being not only truthful but wishful to spare your feelings, is that you have had quite enough kit lately and that your men are getting careless about it. If you are wise you will not call him a liar, but go and mend your ways.

There is no officer in a regiment more easily, or more fatally, misunderstood than the quartermaster. The subaltern, full of zeal and knowledge acquired at a cadet school, often with the best 'Varsity manner, and fancying himself to be someone, sees an elderly and obese old gentleman, who he is told is the quartermaster. He finds his conversation dull, his jokes crusted, his knowledge of, and interest in, tactics nil; and forthwith writes him down of no account. If by luck or instinct he keeps this judgment to himself there is hope for him; he may learn. If he expresses it by word or deed he is doomed. He will go airily one day to the said gentleman and say, "I want fifty pairs of socks, twenty-seven shirts, and some tunics for my platoon; oh, and you might throw in some small kit as well." He will be met with great politeness and a regret that none of these articles are available at present. Or he will be asked firmly where his old kit is, and on confessing its absence will receive a drastic lecture on the duties of young officers, a lecture which will presently be confirmed by the Adjutant. From then on he will be a marked man. He will never hear of the arrival of fresh supplies till it is too late and his brother officers have got there before him with their demands; he will never get his share of those little windfalls which a quartermaster alone knows how to secure. In short, he will pay dear for his experience. But if he be lucky in his instruction or tactful by nature he will engage the great man in easy conversation on indifferent subjects, listen with sympathy to his grievances, applaud his political views, and, in due time, will slip in a remark about how these long marches wear out socks, and how some of his men are footsore from worn-out boots, and how keen he is to have them present a smart appearance at the next inspection and to be a credit to the regiment. He will be rewarded by an invitation to visit the store next

morning with a carrying party, he will be able to clinch his advantage by a non-official bearing to the Q.M.S. and his satellites, and ever after he will have his men excellently clothed and fed. And all done by kindness.

For quartermasters, and all in their department, are the kindest of men. Their work demands accuracy in very technical details, and the strictures of Ordonnance authorities impose on them an economical turn of mind. Moreover, their sedentary occupation induces a certain stoutness as the years go by. On the other hand, the regiment and its well-being are their pride and glory. Their one aim in life is to make all ranks comfortable, well fed, and well equipped. And this kindly purpose has its due effect, making them genial and generous souls; it is only in self-defence, or if treated with lack of ceremony, that they cry "Famine" when there is plenty, and hedge themselves round with technical procedure. It is only necessary to use tact and to conform to the rules of the game as they play it for anyone to obtain his share of their good qualities. If anyone complains that he seriously dislikes the quartermaster, there is probably one person to blame—who is not the quartermaster.

It was, of course, in peace time that the Q.M. really flourished. In those days he had a satisfactory office, minions who knew the routine exactly and could speak the language, and a regiment whose wants could be calculated months in advance. His schemes unfolded themselves, and were fulfilled with majestic thoroughness. His indent books and ledgers were massive and accurate, and he was treated with abject deference. To him, as to many others, war has brought its trials. In training at home he is misled by the possession of an office, and many of the details of regimental peace life, into expecting business as usual. He is rudely deceived. From below he is plagued with more urgent demands, for you cannot carry out summer field days in the mud of winter without severe wear and tear on kit; while from above comes an increasing difficulty in supplying him with stores, and he, poor man, cannot use the "personal touch", but must fall back on the usual official methods. So long as his regiment is at home he is between the Devil and the deep sea, and his hair grows greyer, and life in a draughty hut is apt to congest his bronchial tubes. All credit to many of his kind who, unfit for service abroad, toil endlessly and cheerfully amid the discomforts of a winter camp at home.

As soon, however, as the regiment is warned for active service he has a respite. It is easier to fit out a regiment in England than in France; his indents are treated with greater respect, supplies flow in, and he is almost able to satisfy everybody. His only difficulty now is to see that everybody gets what they need, and he can say lurid things about incomplete kit inspections. So for a time he has rest, and crosses the Channel with all the satisfaction of a good task well done. But once in "sunny France"—who was the ignorant or deceitful writer of those words?—his troubles begin anew on an unprecedented scale. To begin with, he is never sure of two nights running in the same quarters. His office consists of his books and such billets as he can find. He has no stores, for if he had them they would have to be abandoned each time that the regiment moved. Yet the regiment depends on him now not merely for efficiency, but for bare existence. He must be prepared to draw rations at any time and at any place, and if he gets no orders on the subject he must go and get them. For a regiment will stand anything except ill-feeding, and no man can fight on an empty stomach. Nor is his post without danger: he moves with the battalion headquarters, and has to travel along roads and to halt at cross roads which are marked on the map, and consequently under shell fire. Most of his work, too, is of necessity done by night, over roads ankle deep in mud, and full of shell holes, and with horses whose survival under war conditions is a marvel. This during an advance or a retreat. In fixed trenches a regiment will often have the same rest billets for many weeks at a time, and

the quartermaster has a chance. But still his energy and industry must be prodigious. Every man carries with him to the trenches nearly 100 lbs. of kit and equipment; nearly every man, in some mysterious way, loses at least half of it while he is in the trenches, and on his return to rest billets, muddy, unshaven, "beat to the world", it is to the quartermaster that he, or his officer, looks for restoration. Tea must be ready when the men arrive; billets must be prepared, stores must have been accumulated—begged, borrowed, or stolen—and they must all be issued to replace what has been lost. The old peace time excuse—stores not yet arrived—is not accepted. A man cannot keep well if his boots have no soles to them, nor warm if his cardigan is full of holes, and he has no leather jerkin or "teddy bear". All these things must the Q.M. accomplish, in spite of the fact that Ordonnance officers say his indents are excessive, and R.T.O.'s greet him with, "No, your stuff isn't on this train; I expect it will be up to-morrow". Through it all he has to be unsleeping, uncomplaining. That he is so is one of the numerous miracles presented by that composite miracle the British Army.

R. H.

THE SHORE.

BY WILFRID OMER-COOPER.

One place still is magic found;
One place still is fairy ground:
On the seashore at the dawn
Of some wondrous summer morn
When the joyous wind doth blow
Sun-dried seaweed to and fro
Rustling over yellow sands
Where the happy fairy bands
Dance their ringlets ere the day
Drives the little folk away.
Here the mermaid on the rocks
Singing, combs her golden locks,
And the seagull passes by
With his wild and solemn cry,
While the spray comes blowing in,
Beaten into lacework thin,
And the lark, high overhead,
Sings for joy that night is fled.
While to hearts that grow not old
Magic secrets shall be told.

EVERYONE who has lived for any length of time by the sea knows that strange fascination which always draws one back to the eternal waters which cleanse the shores of all the world. To me the great river Oceanus which joins together all lands and all peoples seems also to bridge over all time: it has not changed its everlasting way since the days when Odysseus, with unstopped ears, listened to the song of the Sirens and strove to break his bonds. When I think of Mother Earth I feel that I am of the dust, and must return to the dust; but by the eternal stream there dwell the Immortals, and I am as one of them, without beginning and without end.

I was born by the sea, and, walking on the shore in storm and sunshine, I have learnt to love the unsearchable waters in all their moods: the seashore has been my truest companion, and when I have felt the awful loneliness of the crowded town I have turned to the well-beloved face of the sea and found the fellowship which I sought. It has become a part of my very soul, and I trust that when I am free of this poor body the empty case will rest beneath the waters of its desire, while the freed spirit seeks the sea of glass mingled with fire.

I cannot believe that those who spend their lives in the midst of the "watery waste" know it best; rather is it those who seek the caves where Proteus keeps guard and the wave-beaten shore, "where strange things were done in the ancient ages". Here the old magic seems to have found its last stronghold, and here the Little People still meet "to dance their ringlets to the whistling wind", while amid the storms the spirits of the dead, in the shape of birds, pass to and fro through the mist and spray. Walking here among the rocks, with the white cliffs towering overhead, beaten back by the wind that drowns all noises save the wild whistle of the curlew, I feel that I have at last

freed myself from the weary world and have reached that strange Isle of Dreams where nothing can surprise, and it would be as natural to meet Odysseus with his wayworn crew as a storm-beaten fisherman.

And here I spend the happy hours, searching among rocks and seaweed for that knowledge which shall remain, not the knowledge of men which shall have no strength or endurance, knowing that my life is bound up with that of all things which dwell in the waters, and that the sea and the land are mine for ever. For I know that though my body passes away, and my name is forgotten by men, yet the cliffs and the blue waters and all creeping things will not forget, and none can take away my part in them while the wind shall blow along the shore. As I hunt among the rocks, with the gulls screaming above me and the half-frozen spray beating against my face, or in the drowsy summer weather with the ripples murmuring along the shore and mingling their sound with the distant breaking of the waves on the rocks far out to sea, I feel that I have at last found my place in the natural order of things, that place from which man has travelled so far. With my heart filled with the wonder of the creatures of the depths, I long to rebuild the altars of Poseidon, that men may again know that it is he who has power over the heart of man and can overcome all things save Him who has said, "Hitherto shalt thou come and no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed".

Yet there have been times when I have been almost frightened by the grey horror of the sea wherein are the dead without number and the shapeless, eyeless things that creep along the unseen slime of the depths. At such times as I wander along, gathering "the harvest of the storm", I seem to understand why the Celts spoke of the hostile forces of the Llyr, Lord of the Sea, as huge and monstrous, and ever striving against the Children of the Light. But, even so, the grandeur and the wonder of the unconquerable waters fill my soul, and I feel that, come what may, I have leagued myself for good or ill with the Masters of the Waves, and need fear nothing while I am true to my bond.

And the dull days give place to the wild winter seas, full of strength and the call of battle, and covering the shore with white flakes of foam. At such times most of all I feel the joy of existence full of strength and vigour, and rejoicing in the combat as I press forward against the wind, gathering between the rush of the waves the strange forms that lie among the sea-wrack: or, with the frost binding the very stones on the beach, and the dead seaweed lying stiff and white along the tide-marks, I watch the wild geese rise and pass across the white waters or the flocks of dotterel and dunlin cross whistling to some more secluded strip of sand, and know in my heart that these things are in truth mine unto the end. Then come the Spring breezes along the sands, and at night the mystic moonlight, bringing back all its ancient magic to the lonely shore. And last, Summer, with its long, warm days, when, as I lie out on the smooth, sloping downs, where the peaceful sheep are feeding while the gulls sail past with their wild, solemn cry, full of the very spirit of freedom itself, and "the crooked sea beneath me crawls", I feel that the strength and wonder of the land are as they were in the beginning.

As I sit on a grass-covered mound within which one who has found the great peace has been resting through the long centuries, while all about me, among the sweet-smelling thyme, the deep hum of the bees sounds like the voice of the Earth itself, singing in the joy of its beauty, I seem at last to understand the great enigma: "A day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as a day". The Earth and I seem to have become of one thought and one love bounded by the everlasting voice of the sea. And, looking out across these eternal waters, I know that this is indeed Nirvana, in which there is no desire.

Or wandering along the beach, where the hot sunshine beats down on the stones, I know in my heart that the sea and the wind and the blue sky do not

change, and the circle of the ages is only among men as they, with dim or clear eyes, see the wonder of all things. All knowledge and all beauty are here, and once again man seems to have his hand upon the door that leads to the only true wisdom. The very names of the dwellers among the rocks—Palæmon and Galatea, Nereus and Phylloë—seem to tell us that the old order is restored and once more men return to that strong and primitive study and worship of Nature which made the Greeks great. Again, as at the beginning, these names stand not for the unhealthy visions of an artificial creed but for an actual part of the real and all-pervading beauty of Life, and we lift our eyes to behold the Golden Age returning within the hearts of men. For the thoughts of men may endure for a season, but Nature is unto Eternity.

THE LANE PICTURES.

BY C. H. COLLINS BAKER.

SIR HUGH LANE'S French pictures have certainly amassed an unearned increment of fame. When in the spring of 1914 they entered on their long and dusty sleep in the National Gallery cellars they were regarded as a moderately good collection of an interesting movement; in those remote days "The Lane Collection" would have started no spirit to speak of. How we have changed all that! To-day the mere mention of the pictures arouses all the talents in Dublin and in London, compelling them to mingle their tears and protestations in an enchanting correspondence, and exciting the Irish Party to supernatural love of art and country. How Lane must enjoy the fun!

And now, after all these tears, and without having struck a blow, the pictures emerge into the light famous, but looking much the same as in their obscure days. Critics need steady heads to attain a detached view of them ungiddied by their adventitious fame. The great picture of the show is Puvis's "Decollation of St. John"; it takes its place among the few fine designs in the National Collection. In this monumental work Puvis plays his part in that reaction from the seductions of chiaroscuro and atmosphere which from time to time crops up, luckily for art. In the next room hang typical examples of the Bolognese and Chiaroscurist schools, and most of Sir Hugh's French pictures that accompany the Puvis represent another aspect of the same artistic tendency—the tendency to blur and muffle form in so-called mystery. The arch-muffers, of course, were Andrea del Sarto, Leonardo, and Correggio, and none will deny that at their doors, no less than at Raphael's and Titian's, a heavy responsibility lies. For precious as in themselves are atmosphere and chiaroscuro and our modern variants—plein-air and Impressionism—yet in the end it has always worked out that art has painfully to retrace its way from the deplorable lengths to which it has quite logically gone by following them up. That is to say, that while we could not have done without the masters of those movements, we can but regret that we were not spared their pupils. On the other hand, we have never had similar cause to regret the pupils of those rare masters whose expression lies in sharp silhouette, large planes, and lucid colour relief. Even the baldest poster proper is more stimulating than Impressionism or plein-air run to seed. Psychologists may determine why the general human mind is attracted by softness and fudge rather than by incisive and unmitigated form. The art historian merely notes that while no school has ever decayed through severity of form and simplicity of plane, innumerable schools and artists have been corrupted by desire for formlessness.

With Puvis hang three other contourists, if one may use the word: Degas, Daumier, and Manet. The rest of the movement represented in this group of pictures is inherently soft-edged. Degas's "La Plage" is frankly a relic of the Japonais vogue that ran through Paris in the 'seventies. In principle this picture is anti-Impressionistic, because it misses atmo-

sphere and sunlight. The background is not at one in this respect with the brilliantly designed foreground silhouettes, for when he made this picture Degas had not learnt how to fuse his two main interests, pattern and plein-air. Nor in more important ways is this so penetrating in character as his later work. But, all the same, it has qualities of perception, of colour, and draughtsmanship that ensure its rank with the lastingly important pictures of its period. For this Degas may be said, moreover, what must be said for Daumier's "Don Quixote": even if it is not the finest example of the master in the world, it is about the only one left available for the British nation. The "Don Quixote" is characteristic of the uncompromising design-habit of Daumier's mind, and with the Degas it stands out in its present company like a firm silhouette against a misty distance. Manet, again, must be distinguished from what we now classify as Impressionism, for he plays for simple bulk and mass and contour as opposed to envelopment in atmosphere. His "Eva Gonzales", if no deeper than a Sargent or a Lawrence, as far as characterisation is concerned, is in a different world as regards artistic outlook and painter-like conception. Lawrence forestalled the camera, and Sargent, save in exceptional moments, gives it a brilliant lead; both present their sitters in a popular and attractive form. Manet, on the other hand, at no point runs over, as railway people say, the photographer's line, and he is neither sentimental nor of the theatre; his colour, moreover, is too personal and too well-bred to be obvious or smart. It is this distinguished sense of colour that makes his "Concert aux Tuileries" so delightful rather than any structural merit.

Of the Impressionistic pictures, the best is Manet's "Vetheuil", in which the precious qualities of the school are manifested. The vision is so fresh, the revelation of a new aspect so clear, that we are permanently enriched. Neither the Pissarro nor the Boudin have the newness and the radiance of Manet's snow piece: the former is commonplace; the latter almost sophisticated and Bond Street. Renoir's excessive reputation does not thrive upon "Les Parapluies", a thoroughly sentimental and academic performance, bad in colour and devoid of design. The early Corot, "Avignon", shows us that Corot was one of those whom softness and blurred contours corrupted. This clearly designed and brilliantly sunny picture of his Italian period is hardly reconcilable with the type of Barbizon Corot beloved of collectors twenty years ago. A still life of great charm is Bonvin's little picture, in which colour is used with perfect simplicity and instinctive taste. Vuillard's "Mantelpiece", the Belgian Alfred Stevens's "The Present", and Forain's "Law Court" are good examples of artists whom the National Gallery ought to include.

CORRESPONDENCE.

LEADERS OF INDUSTRY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Among the problems which should receive the immediate attention of the commercial community is that of future leadership.

It is lamentably true that among the precious lives being lost in the war there are large numbers of those who might have been the leaders of the future. Amongst the material that remains none must be wasted. The leaders of industry, in particular, should take steps to provide for a sufficient and continuous flow of talent into industrial life.

May I put forward a proposal?

The fact must be faced that the starting points in business do not attract enough of the country's best brains. If, after the war, suitable commercial houses would offer posts at a starting wage comparable with the higher divisions of the Civil Service, I think that they would secure for their service a considerable increase in talent. These positions should be offered

to men who had passed a standard, the details of which should be settled by leaders of our educational and business communities. If the educational world and parents knew that there were, say, one hundred business posts to be filled each year by men passing this approved examination, the result should be that our schools and universities would be encouraged to train men for these positions.

It must be borne in mind that whilst specific education is of importance, a man's success depends upon his character and qualities. It would be unwise for employers to do more than state the qualities desired in a man for particular positions, together with such detailed knowledge as it was felt he should possess. Our educational authorities should then be able to suitably train him.

Until the starting points in a business career are made more attractive and definite, I fear the commercial community will lose precious material at a time when it is vitally necessary that the business personnel of the country should be strengthened.

Yours faithfully,

H. E. MORGAN.

PEACE CONDITIONS AND THE HOHENZOLLERN DYNASTY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

5, Clement's Inn, London, W.C.,

26 January, 1917.

SIR,—The fundamental motive which has inspired the German peace overtures is fear of the growing intensity in Germany and Austria of the desire for peace. While it is difficult to estimate the value of all items of news which reach us, there can be no doubt that serious discontent exists, and, among the other German States, a budding disaffection to their Prussian overlords. The Kaiser's advisers were astute enough to see that, if they did not open negotiations, their political system would soon be in peril. The Allies have not played into their hands by listening to them; but we should not only refuse a fresh lease of life to the thing we set out to destroy, we should help it to its death by proclaiming the resolve never to make terms with Germany while the Hohenzollerns rule. Such a declaration would be in accordance with the aims we have set before us. In conjunction with our Allies, we have lately re-affirmed our determination to pursue the war to a successful issue. The question of the dynasty will be the criterion of victory. We went to war in order to crush Prussian militarism. The Hohenzollerns created it. They are the head and front of it. Their tradition, that peace is a period in which to prepare for war, is its inspiration. If the dynasty were to survive, the prestige of the military caste would speedily be restored by the arts which created it. Every German boy would be taught that the war was a partial victory which it was his duty to complete. The fall of the dynasty will be the seal of the victory, for in that fall the whole Prussian system will be discredited. This will form the most important of those guarantees for the future on which we have always insisted. There is no hope of anything in the nature of a permanent peace while the Hohenzollerns remain; with the abolition of their influence the German peoples may renounce the dream of world-domination.

There are diplomatic reasons which make it difficult for the Allied Governments to announce this as their official policy. There are none which need prevent the peoples of the Allied countries from declaring that they will be content with nothing less. But it must be done quickly. The rulers of Germany will try again. If they can induce us to enter into negotiations, their position will be virtually secure. A national movement is necessary.

I shall be glad to hear from all who read this letter and agree with it.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

ROBERT ELSON.

ADMIRAL JELlicoe ON MODERN NAVAL PROBLEMS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

17 January 1917.

SIR,—The speech of the late Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet, delivered in the City on the 11th inst., was well worthy the serious attention of every intelligent member of the community; for it revealed, as no previous official utterance has revealed, the enormous technical difficulties imposed on the Navy in its task of preventing the emergence of enemy craft (surface craft, as well as submarines) from, and safe return to, their bases, a task the successful accomplishment of which is too often assumed as the merest matter of course, so far, at least, as surface vessels are concerned.

Of the still more formidable task which the Navy, or the Army and Navy conjointly, will have to accomplish before any effectual peace settlement can be arrived at—that of bringing to action and destroying the enemy's main Battle Fleet—the First Sea Lord, with the wisdom which might be expected of him, said nothing. Events are not yet ripe for that consummation, save, possibly, in the imagination of those cheery "optimists" who believed that they discerned long ago that which appears to have hitherto escaped the scrutiny of the majority of responsible naval men—the abject failure and inefficiency of the main naval forces of the enemy.

Far from subscribing to this very popular theory, Sir John stated quite frankly that he does not criticise the Germans for their strategy, or for not taking any risks with their fleet. He showed, too, in perfectly clear language, the possibility of the enemy's fleet getting well to sea before we receive warning, and instanced the German fleet raid of August last, when a portion of that force "came within innumerable distance of the English coast but turned back, presumably because the presence of our Fleet was reported by their aircraft".

Such frankness as this is all to the good in the interests of the supreme essential of keying the nation up to its utmost endeavour, and keeping it there until the goal is reached; but one at least of the Old Guard of "optimistic" journals was sufficiently true to its principle of "not alarming the public" as to thoughtfully omit Admiral Jellicoe's reference to the August raid from its report. This kind of thing would be merely amusing if nothing serious were at stake. Such incalculable harm has been done, however, by this short-sighted practice in the earlier stages of the war that what little of it survives can hardly receive too vigorous a condemnation.

Of Admiral Jellicoe's stirring appeal to shipyard workers to make good the depletion of our merchant fleet resultant from the submarine menace, and of the seriousness of the latter, it is not necessary to dwell in a letter having for its object the direction of attention to the less popular lessons of the speech; the more so, because, in so many cases, the appeal to the shipyards has been treated as the sole lesson which it was intended to convey.

Yours faithfully,
REALIST.

GREAT SCOTT!

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—I am flattered by Mr. Baumann's interest in my little paper on Walter Scott, and gladly contribute all that I know about "Great Scott!" It is not much: I have been a student of slang for many years and a note-taker, but I am not satisfied as to the origin of this phrase. The best book of reference, "Slang and its Analogues", by John S. Farmer and W. E. Henley, merely follows Barrère and Leland's "Dictionary of Slang" (2 vols., privately printed) in making the following suggestion of an American origin.

"Possibly a memory of the name of General Winfield Scott, a presidential candidate, whose dignity and style were such as to win him the nickname 'Fuss and Feathers'."

Farmer and Henley give quotations with exact references, which are essential in this kind of inquiry. We must know

when the phrase was first used. The earliest quotation they supply is from the "New York Mercury" of 1888, followed by passages from an American writer of sensation, the "Licensed Victuallers' Gazette" and Mr. Nat Gould's deathless sporting prose, all in 1891. The phrase, however, occurs earlier in English, for it is used by the writer of the 'Arry ballad in "Punch", 1 December 1888, and twice in "Punch" for 1887, 13 August and 19 November. This looks as if the phrase were familiar in the later 'eighties in England. Perhaps some reader can put it back still earlier, but even so it will be too long after Sir Walter, I think, to refer to him. It is quite possible that Hughie Drummond or some of the other frolicsome folks so neatly hit off in "A Pink'un and a Pelican" made the phrase out of the great Scott of the oysters. They made many excellent phrases, these revellers of the 'eighties.

I rather doubt the American derivation, since the latest and best book on Americanisms ignores it; but no other is put forward by philological authorities, and "Notes and Queries" supplies no help. The expression is clearly, as C. Stoffel, a learned foreigner, observes, a colloquial apology for an oath, like its variant "Great Cæsar!" and the goose which Socrates swore by instead of Zeus. It is always, so far as my examples go, spelt "Great Scott!" The earlier Scotts of the Border were spelt with one "t" or two indifferently, and were originally, I imagine, called Scots because it was advisable in the debatable region to know what nation a man belonged to. These territorial names are applied to persons who have left their original country or nation. For instance, Inglis (English) is a regular Scottish name, and the Cornishes are a Devonshire family. At the beginning of the thirteenth century Michael Scott the wizard had sufficient reputation abroad to justify the phrase "Great Scott!" for Dante thought it worth while to put him in the "Inferno".

Yours truly,
THE WRITER OF THE ARTICLE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

The Grange, near Rotherham,

21 January 1917.

SIR,—I always thought that the exclamation "Great Scott!" referred to the famous wizard, Michael Scott. He is said by F. T. Palgrave, in his preface to "Scott's Poetical Works," 1866, to have been an ancestor of Sir Walter Scott, and to have been given by Dante a place in Hell below that of the sorcerers Amphiaraus and Teiresias.

In this case the expression should be found anterior to the time of the great novelist and poet.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
GILBERT E. MOULD.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—The Scott thus invoked has, of course, nothing to do with Great Britain. It is an imported Americanism of yesterday, as old as the hills out there, "Great Scott and General Jackson." The former was the American General of the Mexican War of '48; and, incidentally, served against us as a subaltern in 1812-13. You will doubtless hear this from many quarters.

Yours, etc.,
SENEX.

AN ANALOGY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Dorking,
Surrey.

SIR,—It has always seemed strange that more attention has not been drawn to the many close resemblances between the original old Legal Administration (1905-14) and that of Napoleon III. The peculiar, very peculiar methods, *par exemple*, they both employed to get into power in the first place. Of the two methods, the *coup d'état* of the latter is preferable, as that required some pluck on the part of the military adventurers who worked it, compared to the legal

ones who gained office by a contemptible lie that they had to disown when it had served its purpose. One was led to these conclusions by lately coming across the faded photograph bought in Paris, May 1870, of Napoleon III. surrounded by his Ministers. There is no need to give the names of all of them, for only two are remembered now, viz., Emile Olivier and Marshal Leboeuf, and that simply from the misfortunes they brought upon their country 46 years ago; and it may be safely said that, 46 years hence, with the exception of Mr. Lloyd George, of all the legal failures who got in on the Chinese lie in 1906 only two, Mr. Asquith and Lord Haldane, will be remembered, and for the very same reasons. The French are a very practical people, and for the way their Ministers deceived their Emperor and betrayed their country there was not a single one of them who did not receive his congé by the time the war had lasted six weeks. How different with us! Why, the war was a perfect piece of luck for the "very wise men", as Mr. Winston Churchill without any intentional sarcasm, has called them. With civil war in sight in Ireland in July 1914 they must have been taken at their real value, they must have been found out, whereas the war actually gave them the chance of hanging on.

Then take the De Morny and Haussmann scandals, etc. These were quite as bad as regards jobbery and corruption as any we have suffered in recent years from those who preached progress and the "elevation of the toiling masses". And again, just as Napoleon's Ministers were warned time after time by Colonel Stoffel in Berlin as to what the Germans meant to do, and took no precautions, so, in the same way, ours paid no heed to Lord Roberts and Lord Charles Beresford. The legal indispensables had more important affairs to see to; so Lord Haldane was allowed to reduce the old Line regiments and Artillery, and to sack thousands from Woolwich. Then, apart from losing the two-Power standard, Mr. McKenna actually reduced the Coastguard, which just gave the Germans the chance, under pretence of yachting, of taking soundings all round our coast. True, he suddenly woke up, thanks to the Navy League, and began to build Dreadnoughts in a hurry; but then he suddenly found out, as Lord Beresford had previously pointed out to him, that there was no port on the East Coast that could take them. As a rule, if a man buys valuable horses, he takes care first that he has got some stables to put them in. But "very wise men" have laws of their own.

However, just as France rose purified and consolidated by her misfortunes brought about by her venal and incapable Ministers, so too, for the same reason may we, as we enter the new year, look forward with confidence to a similar fate as we emerge into a purer political atmosphere.

ANDREW W. ARNOLD.

THE PROHIBITION CONTROVERSY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Syracuse Lodge, Torquay.

8 January 1917.

SIR,—The extreme advocates of prohibition forget that some sort of intoxicant has been drunk in these islands from before the time of Caesar. Allowance must be made for heredity. Some persons have prepared those intoxicants. Yet they were, and are, no greater criminals than those who have made fortunes from tea, tobacco, and other probably unwholesome things. And these extremists see no difference between the man who drinks a pint of light wine daily and the dipsomaniac. I venture to suggest that you should publish the alcoholic strength of various drinks. I believe there is some alcohol in ginger beer, in addition to carbonic gas (a sort of poison) and some sickly sweetening matter. You might state after this the strength of the herb beer, said to be still allowed in Russia, of nettle beer, as made in the country in England, of draught cider, of the mildest Bavarian lager beer, of the lightest Hock, Graves, Sauterne, Chablis, and the thin wines of Central Spain and Northern Italy; and so on up to Burgundy, port and spirits. Such a table would enable reasonable and temperate people to judge between the drinkers of the various liquids, from ginger beer to gin. It may be said

that Chablis, for instance, has to be brought by sea to this country. Tea, coffee and cocoa have also to be brought by sea, and vastly greater distances. If no one in England drank Chablis the grapes in France could not be used for food, though perhaps some of the larger ones might do for dessert. But all the population of the district would suffer great loss. No one speaks of Italy, which goes on quietly drinking light wines. If the temperance advocates could make the people of the British Isles as sober as the people of Italy they would have done enough.

I am, Sir, yours obediently,

H. B. DEVEY.

THE TICHBORNE CASE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—With reference to your review of Mr. Atlay's work on this case, perhaps I may be permitted to say that I have carefully read it and counted about a hundred and twenty mistakes in it, not to mention the entire omission of some most important facts.

Yours faithfully,

W. A. F.,

Author of "An Exposure of the Orton Confession of the Tichborne Claimant."

THE PANAMA CANAL.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Colon, Republic of Panama,

4 January 1917.

SIR,—I write this letter at Colon, Republic of Panama. It may interest your readers to know that the Panama Canal is now definitely open, and that traffic is in full swing in both directions.

Yesterday I saw several ships pass through the Gatun Locks, one of which, the Chilean steamer *Limari*, brought passengers from Valparaiso. There were six ships passed through the lock during the day—three in each direction.

There are still landslides in the Culebra Cut; and I am informed by one of the engineers that dredging will be necessary there for at least two years, but traffic goes on without interruption.

The Gatun Locks are noble constructions, consisting of three immense double locks, each of which lifts a ship about thirty feet, or nearly ninety feet in all. At the top of the locks is the stupendous Gatun dam, holding back the Chagres river, and creating an entirely artificial lake, 164 square miles in extent, and with a maximum depth of 90 feet.

All these works are carefully guarded by sentries (prepared to shoot), and the canal is further defended by batteries and by the battleship *Charleston*, which lies off the Atlantic entrance, and can be clearly seen, in a straight line down the canal from the Gatun Locks, at a distance of seven miles. The *Charleston* could destroy the lock gates with a single shot, and thus prevent the passage of a hostile fleet.

Last night General Sibert, the engineer who constructed the Gatun dam and locks, arrived at this hotel ("The Washington") and gave a reception. He came down the canal from Panama, and was received at the Gatun Locks with a salute of field guns, which was the first salute ever fired upon the Panama Canal. I happened to be at Gatun at the time of his arrival there, and I afterwards heard him speak at this hotel. He is a tall, well-built man, of simple and unaffected manners, and with an amiable but determined face, bronzed and reddened by the tropic sun.

Your obedient servant,

BERTRAND SHADWELL.

DECIMAL REFORM.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Rawdon House,

4, Aymer Road, Hove,

29 January 1917.

SIR,—I venture to invite your attention to a matter of urgent national importance, the re-discovery of the national

metre of 5 links or 39·6 inches. As shown in my book, "British Trade and the Metric System", we still use this metre in the rod, pole, or perch of 5 metres, the surveyor's chain of 20 metres, the furlong of 200 meters; and in area, in the square rod of 25, the rood of 1,000, and the acre of 4,000 square metres. Our metric ton is an old and valued friend, the British ton of 2,240 lb. Our measures of capacity, etc., are also practically metric, on this re-discovered scale. Compare the following and you have the matter in a nutshell:—

Metre: British, 39·6 inches; French, 39·37 inches.

Chain: British 20 metres; French, 20 metres.

Ton: British, cubic metre; French, cubic metre; in each case of water at or near the freezing point.

The issue before the British public to-day can be boiled down to this: Shall we adopt the French metric system and scrap or alter every native unit, to the infinite inconvenience of ourselves, the Dominions, and the subject races; or shall we re-establish the British metre, without any change of native units at all, while yet being able to deal with metric countries in a system which they will thoroughly understand?

Practically every argument in favour of the metric system is applicable to the British decimal scale; while in our British system we already possess about the most democratic thing in the world. A perfect system of weights and measures, such as we possess already, is symbolised by the human hand. The four fingers on one hand, eight on two hands, and, when duplicated by adding the feet, sixteen, make a fractional scale, which we use largely in our ordinary tables of all kinds. Taking the ten fingers and ten toes, we accept the well-known illustration of the Decimal Association. Adding in the wrists, we get six radials to each palm, and, ultimately, twelve and twenty-four, representing the duo-decimal scale. I have shown in my book that the British system, as we have it, is composed of these three scales—decimal, fractional, and duo-decimal—mixed together into the "distracting jumble" complained of by metric advocates. All we have to do is to re-separate and complete the scales, when we shall have about the most perfectly human thing on earth, the best in the world, the easiest to learn and apply, a system which, without fear or favour, would serve all classes and also the masses.

The British currency is also, in reason, sufficiently decimal already. Assuming the florin to be 100 cents of account (not coined), the shilling is 50, the sixpence 25, and the threepenny bit 12½ cents. For retail trade, the wage-earner, and the middle-class consumer, and their convenience, we do not divide the threepenny bit into 12½ awkward, troublesome, cents, but into 12 farthings, and thereby save many thousands of pounds' worth yearly of time and labour in small transactions, doing small sums mentally without pencil and paper, and dealing more easily with change. Everybody can test this for himself. Try 19 articles at 1s. 3½d., and 19 articles at 1s. 3s. mentally. The first is (mentally) 19s. + 57d. + 9½d. = 19s. + 5s. + 6½d. = £1 4s. 6½d. The second I will not attempt: it is beyond me without writing it down.

Nobody disputes that decimals are essential in certain cases. What we want is liberty to employ either vulgar fractions or decimals as most suitable for the work to be done. A purely decimal system does not permit of the free use of vulgar fractions, of sixteenths, sixty-fourths, and so on. The British system is the only system in the world which can be made to admit freely both kinds of fractions. It is high time the people and the Government recognised this fact and its bearing on national interests of all kinds.

I am, Sir, yours, etc.,

E. A. W. PHILLIPS, M.INST.C.E.

REVIEWS.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE DEAD.

"Raymond, or Life and Death, with Examples of the Evidence for Survival of Memory and Affection after Death." By Sir Oliver J. Lodge. Methuen. 10s. 6d. net.

THIS book has three parts. The first is a brief sketch, illustrated with many letters, of the life and character of Sir Oliver's son Raymond, who was killed in the war. Raymond was a young civilian engaged in mechanical engineering, not yet remarkable in any way, busy with his work and his open-air amusements, remote from everything that was military or political. When the war came he joined for active service, went to the front early in 1915, and was killed at Hooze, leading his company to an attack, on 14 September 1915. All the pity and terror of war are in this short record—one of millions—and we offer Sir Oliver Lodge our sincere and respectful sympathy.

The third part, on "Life and Death", is a slightly discursive, but interesting and sincere, statement of the author's views on these tremendous subjects. Probably no one is so detached from all personal conviction (and convictions on life and death are surcharged with passionate emotion in all of us) that he can weigh the arguments of another with colourless impartiality. But if the attempt be made to estimate Sir Oliver's position, it can be done best by comparison with two other well-known positions. The agnostic is able to say: "I do not know about these things; I doubt if knowledge of them be possible, if ideas about them do not belong to the vague and lovely realm of dreams and music and poetry, a pleasure-garden of the soul, the gates of which I would not bar, but of which I would remember that a man's work lies outside its walls. Will the lotus content you when outside there is so much we can know and so much we can do? I offer you the drug of work in place of the drug of dreams." A tolerable position.

Christianity and Islam, and many of the religions of the East, have another answer. Out of the unknown there has come a message, glowing, authoritative, transforming; accept it. If you do accept it, there is that within you, a quality, an essence, that will vibrate in a new and shining harmony, as the dull particles of a vapour glow when a current passes through them. Also a tolerable position.

But if you are neither agnostic nor mystic, as appears to be the case of Sir Oliver Lodge, there is nothing for it but a pedestrian collation of straws of comfort from every possible source. Science gives you a little, philosophy more, poetry most of all; but the scientific men and the philosophers and the poets will be none too pleased at the use to which you put the contributions you have levied. At the most, you weave a frail and motley pattern, and although, like Sir Oliver Lodge, you display it in all sincerity and modesty, it seems a tawdry thing compared with the white austerity of the agnostic or the living purple of the mystic.

It is the second part of this book which we must suppose to be the reason of publication, which certainly is the reason for the success of the publication. Sir Oliver Lodge is one of the best-known, most accomplished, and most highly trained of the millions who are to-day mourning the loss of a dearly loved relative. Sir Oliver believes that the personality, including the character, knowledge, and affections, of his dead son persists "on the other side"; that the son, through certain persons known as mediums, has succeeded in communicating with him, and the second part of this book contains the evidence. If the evidence be convincing, it is plain, in the first place, that an enormous number of mourners will be comforted; and, in the second place, that the small group of professional and amateur mediums, now regarded by the general public as dubious cranks, will reap a just reward, moral and material.

It is pertinent to observe that it is not this case that has convinced Sir Oliver Lodge. He had already stated repeatedly and publicly not only his belief in the

possibility of communication with the dead through mediums, but also that his friend, the late F. W. H. Myers, had actually communicated with him. And in this book he makes a claim going beyond the survival of personality and the possibility of communication. Dead persons, it seems, have foreknowledge of future events, for through an American medium Myers sent a warning to Sir Oliver, which Sir Oliver tries to show was a forewarning of Raymond's death. In this respect the American medium falls into line with the familiar fortune-telling rogues of the police-courts, and in the further respect that the warning was of so vague a kind that its meaning did not become clear until after the event.

Sir Oliver Lodge's belief in mediums, it is safe to surmise, was widely known in mediumistic circles. Soon after the war broke out a certain Mrs. Kennedy, who "has the gift of automatic writing", and was in the habit of receiving messages from her dead son, got into touch with Sir Oliver "because of his investigations into spirit-life". Sir Oliver introduced her to Mrs. Wriedt, a professional, and she subsequently discovered for herself two other professionals, Mr. Vout Peters and Mrs. Osborne Leonard. As soon as poor Raymond's death was announced in the papers the little group was, so to say, "on to it", and the evidence that was obtained subsequently came through them in a series of sittings, sometimes with one, sometimes with another of the group. It is the somewhat naive belief of Sir Oliver that at least at some of the interviews he or Lady Lodge or other members of the family were unknown to the mediums.

Mrs. Kennedy got the first message, through her dead son Paul, to the effect that he would "bring Raymond to his father" as soon as Sir Oliver would call. But Lady Lodge, who was arranging with Mrs. Kennedy on behalf of a widowed mother, was just in time to get the first real message, written by Mrs. Kennedy during her call. Vout Peters, Mrs. Leonard, and Mrs. Kennedy herself held the subsequent interviews with the various members of the Lodge family. In the course of which the evidence gradually accumulated.

It is plain that evidence obtained in this way has no particle of objective value. Sir Oliver and Lady Lodge were already believers, and were under the stress of palpitating emotion. The mediums were acquainted with each other and with the quest of the Lodges, the latter, in fact, having been drawn in by the direct invitation of one of the group. We do not profess to explain all that happened, and have an open mind as to whether deliberate or unconscious deception was at work. But the records are such a tissue of "hedgings" and reservations that we lean to the opinion that the method was a not very skilful "guessing game". Take, for instance, the famous group photograph, the existence of which was, of course, known to at least the twenty-one officers who sat for it, and proofs of which had been seen by some of them, although the actual prints which ultimately came into the possession of the Lodge family were made in England subsequent to the interviews. Sir Oliver, through the medium, asked if it had been taken indoors or out of doors. The medium stuck to the phrase that it was "practically" out of doors; why "practically"? It was actually out of doors. Sir Oliver suggested a "shelter", and the medium obliged by drawing vertical lines; there was a shelter, and there were both vertical and horizontal lines. And so on.

It is curious to note how the records become vague and halting, break off unexpectedly, give misleading or dubious hints when they relate to verifiable matter, and how they become glib and consecutive when they

relate to what Sir Oliver admits to be "unverifiable" matter, and it is also still more "evidential" how the unverifiable matter about spheres and incorporeal bodies, and so on, corresponds with the familiar lucubrations of Theosophists.

It is probably now unnecessary to state our opinion that Sir Oliver Lodge has done a public disservice in issuing this book.

SAILOR AND VAGABOND MUSICIAN.

"A Vagabond's Odyssey: Being Further Reminiscences of a Wandering Sailor-Troubadour in Many Lands." By A. Safroni-Middleton. Grant Richards. 10s. 6d. net.

GEORGE PRIMROSE, the adventurous and happy-go-lucky son of the vicar, played and paid his way from Flanders to Paris by merry tunes, which procured him a lodging and subsistence for the next day. A repetition of the feat in our more sophisticated age does not seem likely. But many a time, and under various skies, the author of this engaging volume, Mr. Safroni-Middleton, has found with his violin a good audience, food and drink, and a lodging for the night. This is the second record of his vagabond adventures as sailor and musician, and his material remains ample and in its significant details rich in interest. We shall look forward to the third volume he promises, "wherein I shall tell of my life when I settled for a while among civilised peoples and became respectable, and my serious troubles commenced".

The earlier troubles would be enough to give most people pause in a wayward career, but the author's buoyant youth and enthusiasm for music carried him through all his difficulties. This haphazard life, especially in the easy-going islands of the South Seas, is well enough for gay youth; but the Bohemian, as he grows older, generally ranges himself. He does not wear his loose clothes, his purse full of spiders, and his Autolycus mood so gracefully when he is older, and the men of mature years wedded to such ways are generally failures who have given up the world or deliberately seek to hide from that portion of it which was theirs. Mürger—or is it Victor Hugo?—has explained this perfectly. Truth to tell, we value the author's reflections much less than his stories and incidents of unconventional life. He has tried earnestly, we learn, in this book to polish his efforts, and he often gives us racy, unaffected English which is much to the point. But if his labour has been devoted to elaborating sentimental rhetoric, frankly we think it has been largely wasted.

It is a mistake, for instance, to gush about "undiscovered shores" on one page, to repeat the same two words on the next, and on the next to speak again of "undiscovered lands afar". The author thinks that "out at sea with sailors a fellowship exists that is almost unknown in the cities of the world". This is not true. In the great centres of civilisation, so sombre for the miserable, harder tests are proposed for fellowship than in the flowery regions of the South Seas, and not seldom these tests are triumphantly passed by self-sacrifice. The author luxuriates over the days of his youth:

"How I recall it all, my beautiful youth—aye, as a woman's heart secretly remembers her first love and, gazing backward, feels the old passion, sees the rosy horizon of dreams, the absolute certitude of old vows spoken by that voice that expressed all the happy universe! Yes, so do I remember the sleepless, hungry nights under the stars that shone over the trees, nights radiant with dreams."

If the author knew Stevenson's prose as well as he

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knew him in the flesh he might have quoted the dictum about "Respectability—the deadliest gag and wet blanket that can be laid on men", and have done with the subject, which by repetition grows tedious. Like the old and apparently stupid bushman, whom the author attacked with a shower of verbiage about the vastness of things, we are inclined to murmur occasionally that we know a little about life and its problems. But that would be ungrateful, for we have been well entertained by this story of vagabondage, and the scene changes so quickly that the book is not the worse, perhaps, for being a little incoherent in its sequence, going forward and backing on this trail and that. The author was in Samoa before and after Stevenson's death, and here he enlarges his brief reminiscences of the lean, keen man of letters. We get glimpses of Stevenson on his most unconventional side—the official biography, indeed, mentions his taste for disreputable old "shellbacks"—we read a tribute to Damien of Louvain, from one of his old servants, and see the author relieving the novelist from the attentions of a native girl whose ardour had the excuse, it turned out, of Mrs. Nickleby's suitor over the wall!

A musician like the author would be bound to appeal to Stevenson, who had desires for musical accomplishment but, as is indicated, no great success in practice. The view of the novelist's character is, we think, just in the main:

"Stevenson had a sneaking regard for vagabonds, and his eyes twinkled with delight in their company. He was very credulous, and believed a deal that he heard. I think he would have gone off exploring for some new country, or a treasure island, in five minutes if he had been encouraged by some of the fearless adventurers whom he mixed with through his love of vagabondage and adventure. The questions he used to ask men of the seafaring class revealed how implicitly he believed that which they were telling him; yet at other times he seemed alert with suspicion and in a mood to disbelieve actual facts."

Quite so: Stevenson was a man of most various moods, with much of the boy's sudden loyalties and occasional fits of neglect. But, if he wanted to draw out the "shellback", it was surely the right attitude to seem to believe, whether he believed or not. Mr. Safroni-Middleton is rich in prejudices and one-sided views as well as good stories; but we can forgive him the former in view of the latter. His fairy mythology is as graceful as the Samoan girls from whom he gathered it. Mabau, the girl victim of love, is as striking a figure as any we have read of in the romance of the South Seas, and the "twelve fierce-eyed, rough-looking men, attired in big brimmed hats and belted trousers", who form the Charity Organisation of the South Seas, and help on his way, for a consideration, the absconding bank manager or other proclaimed enemy of respectability for good reasons, seem to have stepped straight out of the pages of a desperate maker of high-coloured fiction. If such characters are still at large, what chances there are in the South Seas of vivid, human material! Those grizzly old chiefs, too, with a club handy to remind them of old days and "long pig" are immense. The author and a companion, on leave from their ship in an island, had a close run for their lives when they smashed in the head of an idol, and only saved the situation by a strong run, followed by a resolute stand and a gift of ships' tobacco. The companion got a broken head himself, for the author aimed a blow with a club at an attacking native which descended with a crash on the wrong man. However, they were both sailors, equal to anything, and when they missed the ship, which had left them on shore, they entered another as stow-aways, lying undetected for several days, living on adjacent barrels and bunches of green bananas and unripe oranges, and parrying the attacks of large, hairy ship rats. The violin smoothed the crisis for the culprits when discovered, though it was first taken for the groans of a ghostly visitor. It accompanies the author through all his wanderings, and he gives us his criticisms of various famous violinists. He ranks a

stone-breaking Norwegian above Joachim, Kubelik, and Kreisler—at least, he thinks that with their technical equipment, and nothing to ruin his hands, he would have been greater. Joachim, however, was at his best when Mr. Safroni-Middleton was too young to hear or understand anything. How high he has got himself in the opinion of the cultivated world as a player we do not know. At least he has played solos to a dusky king as he sat in his hut-room, and has been touched with a dead king's thigh bone on the neck, which is apparently the equivalent of a British knight-hood.

So much adventure has seldom come to one man as the author has already enjoyed. We await his next book with pleasurable anticipations, and it will be all the better if Mr. Safroni-Middleton takes the advice of a competent critic on the text before he publishes it. But perhaps he will not see that: non omnia possumus omnes. We hasten to add that we have no intention of frightening the author with a Latin quotation, like the silent old bushman who stopped the flow of his eloquence.

GERMANY 1815—1852.

"Germany 1815-1890." By Sir Adolphus William Ward, Master of Peterhouse. Vol. I. 1815-1852. Cambridge University Press. 12s. net.

THIS book is at least a clear proof that the English academic mind can remain calm and impartial in the midst of war. Dr. Ward has long been known as foremost among English scholars in the study of modern German history, and he reckons among the chief pleasures of his life "the promotion of a better understanding between two nations now estranged from each other for many a long day". Clearly he has admired the accomplishment of German unity under Prussian domination, and his mind has been steeped in the writings of those scholars who have

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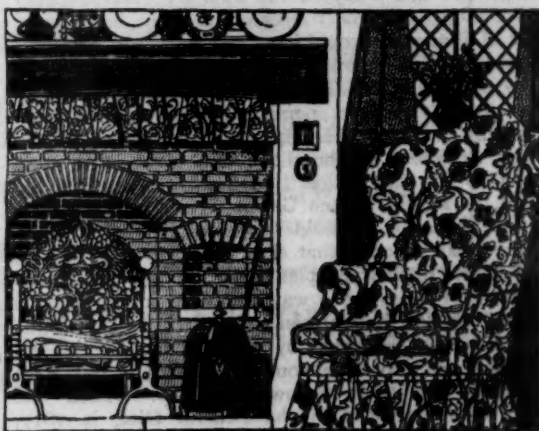
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represented that accomplishment as one of the epic achievements of the human race. Moreover, the Master of Peterhouse has a knowledge of minor German dynasties which would have made him persona grata in our own Victorian Court. Almost we are inclined at times to think that he knows too much, and tries to state too much for the scale of his book. He is dealing with the Germany that emerged from the rough handling of Napoleon, after the Holy Roman Empire had finally passed off the stage, and the German confederation had begun its uneasy existence, with its two Great Powers and its thirty-odd sovereign states, or, more correctly, "personages and bodies", bound together by the weakest of federal ties. Dr. Ward does not attempt a history of events in each state, but he does summarise the principal movements in nearly a dozen provinces, and even essays brief characterisations of their kings, dukes, politicians, and professors, so that we often receive the impression of a stage overcrowded with kinglets and pedants. None the less his book is of very great value as a compressed and exact record; it repays careful study, and a second reading gives greater pleasure than the first.

This period was, as Dr. Ward says, a half-century of struggle and humiliation, and the first reflection that follows on the study of action that failed, and reaction that failed equally, is that Bismarck must have been a very great man to build up out of this chaos the powerful nation we know to our cost to-day. There were two aspirations, one or other of which was felt by nearly every intelligent German: the hope of political freedom and the hope of German unity. Unhappily, few combined these two hopes in equal strength. German liberalism was pitifully weak, and German unity was ultimately achieved by the successes of unscrupulous diplomacy and deliberate war. The critical moment in modern German history was when the King of Prussia declined the position of German Emperor offered to him by the united German Parliament, which enjoyed a precarious existence after the revolutions of 1848. It is possible that if Frederick William IV. had accepted the offer a liberal German Empire might have been created, and the subsequent career of Bismarck would have lost its great impelling motive of German unity at any cost. It is possible, but by no means certain, as Dr. Ward's book makes very clear both the persistency of the German sovereigns' belief in their monarchical rights, and the curious weakness of liberalism as a plant in German soil. This "dreary period" opened with deceit on the part of the kings. When Germany was roused to the war of liberation against Napoleon the sovereigns made a clear promise that they would grant constitutional rights to their peoples when liberation had been achieved. This promise was embodied in the famous Article XIII. of the Germanic Federal Act, but it was never honestly redeemed by most of the kings, and those princes who endeavoured to carry it out were obstructed by their fellow-sovereigns. When the Article was discussed in the Federal Diet, in 1817, "the Prussian view was adopted, which interpreted the Article as a mere general promise, and characteristically recommended an adjournment of the discussion". Prussia, in fact, notwithstanding occasional weakenings, and the sentimentality of her king during the Berlin riots of 1848, was the most powerful pillar of absolutism in Central Europe, more powerful than Austria herself. She was the associate of Russia in the overthrow of "constitutional Poland" in 1831, though Dr. Ward, differing from many historians, describes the action of the Prussian Government as "at once prudent and dignified"; and in 1849 it was the military power of Prussia which suppressed the insurrections in Saxony, the Bavarian Palatinate, and Baden. "The final efforts of the revolutionary party had been overcome with the decisive aid of Prussian bayonets in central Germany, and, practically, by them alone in the south-west." On the other hand, the one important forward movement in these years was of

Prussian origin, the scheme of a Zollverein, of whose beginnings Dr. Ward gives a useful account, though it would have been even more valuable if he had explained the economic conditions and resources of the various states. The future greatness of Prussia may be discerned in the departments of arms and trade, and to a lesser extent in her system of bureaucracy and education.

German liberalism was, as has been said, a plant of weak growth. It must be remembered that the guarantees of individual freedom, which were secured in England during the seventeenth century, were still unknown in many German states during the first half of the nineteenth. This was a question not merely of a Parliamentary constitution, but of day by day liberty in the ordinary affairs of life. The demands of that year of revolution, 1848, were largely concerned with such elementary matters as freedom of thought, speech, assembly, and publication, and the abolition of class privileges and restrictions, which the National Parliament claimed as *Grundrechte*. We do not wonder so much at the obedience of the German people when we remember how slight is their experience of freedom. German liberalism shows no originality. The Moderates borrowed their ideas from England, and the Democrats borrowed theirs from France. Chiefly amongst professors and students of the universities were devotees of these ideas to be found, and university matters were consequently given strange prominence in the plans and fears of Governments. The Carlsbad Decrees of 1819 and the Six Articles of 1832 are worth study as examples of the fear which youthful intellectuals may inspire in the rulers of states, and Dr. Ward compares the Seven Professors of Göttingen, who declined to take the oath of allegiance to the King of Hanover, with our own famous Seven Bishops. Here, again, we find Prussia as the buttress of reaction; it was long before any of the exiled Göttingen professors were allowed to enter Prussian territory. The students' clubs assumed a disproportionate importance. For a short time in 1848 the students of Vienna were virtually rulers of that city. Bismarck himself as a young man belonged to one of these societies, though he expressed the aristocratic view when he condemned their mixture of Utopian ideas with defective breeding. It is curious to note the elaborate legislation against the gymnastic clubs started by Jahn when we remember how these clubs, and the students' societies generally, have been converted into active agencies for spreading the ideal of German world-domination since 1870. Politics are naturally the chief topic of Dr. Ward's survey, and in politics the Germans do not shine. They have neither the lucidity and logic of the Athenian and the Frenchman, nor the practical sense of the Roman and the Englishman.

ONCE A MONTH.

Mr. Hardy opens the "Fortnightly" with "I Met a Man", a poem concerning a vision of the Moulder of Monarchies, characteristically called "It". Prof. Léon Van der Essen, in "Germany's Latest Crime", analyses the Belgian deportations in the light of German and neutral documents, and recognises in them the climax of a policy of spoliation and ruthlessness elaborately arranged in all its details. Mr. Sidney Low, well known for his writing on the British Constitution, considers "The Cabinet Revolution" which has taken place, and which is none the less far-reaching because it has been silent and peaceful. Mr. Low thinks that Parliament can never go back again contentedly "to collective responsibility, the Party Ministry, the secret debating society, and the other usages of the past". Mr. Baumann, in a striking article on "Treaties of Peace", points to the warnings offered by the disappointing treaties which succeeded the four great wars of England during the last two centuries. Even after the decisive victory of Waterloo the settlement failed, almost ludicrously, to secure its objects. History shows that such objects may be achieved without being embodied in a treaty, and that great Powers are not bound by restrictions on paper. The Allies must have some physical sanction for their decrees, and Mr. Baumann discovers four dangers in treaty-making—the rivalries of statesmen, Royal intrigues, especially on the feminine

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side, interference in the domestic politics of other nations, and the trust in proper guarantees already mentioned. The risk nowadays belongs chiefly to the two latter considerations. The policy of the Allies has been clearly stated by Mr. Balfour, whose despatch to the British Ambassador at Washington Mr. Baumann calls "his greatest achievement".

The number is well varied in its contents. Mr. Charles Darwin supplies an attractive picture of "Metchnikoff: The Savant and the Man", and Mr. W. F. Bailey and Jean V. Bates an engaging view of life "In the Heart of Roumania". Mr. T. H. S. Escott gossips on "The Rise and Progress of the English Dinner", and Mr. Granville Barker prints the first portion of a queer satirical study entitled "Souls on Fifth".

"Blackwood's Magazine" maintains throughout an excellent standard of style and is to-day among the best of war commentators. "Odysseus", who opens the December number with a continuation of "The Scene of War", is as welcome as ever with a true vision of the various sights he overlooks. Here he tells us something of the elaborate preparations of machinery which lie behind the French successes on the Western Front, and of the unceasing expedients which make Air Supremacy. Photographs are taken by machines at a height of anything between three and four thousand feet, and each of these is examined by experts specially trained for the business who can draw inferences from pin-points and place a marvellous array of facts before the attacking troops. Further vivid touches bring the luxuries of a German dug-out before us and the personality of General Joffre. "The Left Hand of Abdulla the Beggar", by Ibn-Sabil, is a grim little story of punishment and revenge won by the weapon of a Persian man of substance who became a mutilated beggar. Mr. Robert Holmes tells us more of the interesting story of "Walter Greenway, Hero," which came to him in letters discovered and deciphered with difficulty in fragments of paper rolled into pellets. "The Tale of a Casualty Clearing Station" is continued and is sure of attention, being happily sprinkled with the vernacular. "Convalescent" shows what tact and expedients are demanded from a war-worker.

The "Cornhill" begins with a tribute which is none the less welcome because it was expected. Mr. A. C. Benson writes on his friend since Eton days, Reginald Smith, and shows how kindly and helpful a friend he was. As an editor he "did not like triviality or smartness, but catered for what is perhaps the most stable section of the reading public, not the sharply intellectual, not, as I have heard him say, quoting Lord Stowell, for the people who wanted 'mere novelties', but for those who desired a sober, cultured atmosphere, with some tradition and continuity of aim based upon a liberal simplicity and homely chivalrous emotions". There was, as Mr. Benson suggests, something formidable at first to the stranger in his formal manner, but this was modified upon acquaintance, and his friends knew well his generosity of feeling and his loyalty.

Mr. Boyd Cable, in his story of "The Pink-Tailed Tank", makes the most of its extraordinary ways of getting out of difficult places. H. H. P., in tales of snipe, and Mr. Horace Hutchinson, in some letters which reveal the strong Christian faith of "Chinese Gordon", provide varieties on the war matter which occupies the rest of the number. Mr. Bonnet Copplestone has a striking account of an Oxford man who took up naval work and was as keen on engines as he was on languages, and Major Ewald gives a brief and effective picture of "The Relief". In "Youth in the War" Mr. E. S. P. Haynes introduces us to a brother of Rupert Brooke, the poet himself, and F. H. Keeling. Mr. Haynes remarks that all these three friends of his were "temperamentally opposed to ideals connected with war or any other form of cruelty". Yet all did excellent work in the war. The best paper in the number is the last, "Beating Back from Germany", recorded by Lewis R. Freeman. It is rich in racy English and adventure.

"The 100 Best Investments: Quarterly Supplement." 57, Bishopsgate, E.C. 3d. net.

This publication of the British, Foreign, and Colonial Corporation is very clearly arranged, and should be valuable to those investors who think their own judgment infallible and suffer for it. The Investment Survey begins with the new War Loan, doubtful points concerning which the publishers will be glad to elucidate. Full details are included, and another important section deals with Dollar and other securities subject to special tax. "Steel and Allied Industries After the War" are considered in a special article. There is a list of "Securities Arranged in Order of Yield" and another, in alphabetical order, in which notes beneath the main heading give details of the latest Reports, and of Prospects. Thus it is noted that the Underground Electric Railways are doing well with dense traffic and likely to do better. Many companies are naturally doing great business, in particular those concerned with engineering.

INSURANCE.

SUBSCRIPTIONS TO THE WAR LOAN.

WHATEVER may be the final result of the Government's appeal for a "victory" war chest—and the indications are that the new loan will prove even more successful than was expected at the outset—it is already evident that the response made by the managements of insurance companies will be wonderfully liberal. Some days ago it was announced that their contributions to the new loan, including amounts converted, showed a total of £74,477,000, and since then several notable subscriptions have been made public. It seems probable, therefore, that a sum of £100,000,000 will be exceeded before the lists are closed, as some boards have not yet come to a decision on the subject, and in a few cases permission to publish the figures has not, so far, been given. If the amount mentioned be reached or exceeded, it will say much for the patriotism of insurance managements, who are less able than most companies or persons to change their investments at short notice. Inexperienced writers look at totals, and do not study details. Since the loan was advertised attention has frequently been called to the huge sums accumulated by life offices in the way of funds—just as if the whole of their wealth was available for war purposes. Exactly how much was held by them at the end of December last is not known, but the "Blue-book" issued in 1915 showed that prior to the war—i.e., at the latest date of return (1913-14)—British offices transacting life business held £530,111,661 in the form of capital and funds, while a year later the amount was £551,009,169, or some twenty millions greater.

It may be conjectured from these figures that the assets of the hundred or so most important companies approximated to £570,000,000 on 1 January last, and the difference between that sum and £600,000,000 may be allowed for the insurance companies and societies which do not transact life assurance business in any form whatever. The opulence of insurance companies cannot therefore be questioned, and several Australian and Canadian life offices doing business here are also extremely wealthy. But saying this is not equivalent to admitting that their subscriptions to a national loan can be practically unlimited. Although the new Five per Cent. War Loan is probably the very best investment which has ever been offered them, it would be almost impossible for any company to invest more than a fourth of its total assets in it, and in some cases 10 per cent. or less would be the maximum. Mortgages, which cannot be interfered with preemptorily, account for about one-fifth of the total accumulations, and large sums have also been invested by way of loans on public rates, municipal and county securities, policies, and personal security. Together these classifications, plus the investments made in life interests and reversions, represent more than one-third of the total wealth held or controlled. Large sums have also, it must be remembered, been invested in the purchase of land and house property, ground rents, and feu duties; other assets are held in the form of agents' balances, outstanding premiums, outstanding interest, accrued interest, stamps, and establishment and purchase of business accounts. Considerable amounts in cash have also to be kept available for the immediate payment of claims and other expenses; and, finally, many millions of pounds have had to be deposited with foreign and Colonial Governments, or are otherwise earmarked in respect of business treaties.

Only when these facts are remembered is it possible to realise the magnificence of the effort which is being made by the managements of our leading offices. One and all seem to be doing their best according to the means at their disposal. The subscription of £20,000,000 announced by the directors of the Prudential Assurance Company is scarcely more remarkable than is many another amount which has been mentioned. For instance, £5,000,000 is placed against the name of the Alliance, Commercial Union, and North

British and Mercantile Companies alike; £3,000,000 each against the Phoenix and the Standard Life; £1,250,000 against that of the British Dominions; and £600,000 against that of the London and Lancashire Life and General. These amounts are merely typical of the generosity of the response to the national call, but they show what is being done by life and other insurance offices. They represent not, as one is at first inclined to suppose, from one-fourth to one-fifth of the total assets held by each company, but rather a full half of the amount which is actually available for investment or reinvestment; in one case, indeed, nearly the whole of the assets will be invested in the new War Loan, and several other companies will apparently entrust the Government with from one-half to one-third of their total resources.

That the British Dominions Company should be able to place practically the whole of its assets at the disposal of the Government is due to the fact that the bulk of its investments have recently been made, and happen to be held, in a specially liquid form. The action of the Company in this matter is, however, only another instance of the enterprise shown by the managing director, Mr. E. M. Mountain, who has also seen his way to aid the success of the 5 per cent. Loan by offering special facilities to persons who may not have the necessary funds at their disposal. From either the British Dominions or the Eagle Company a policy can now be obtained which will automatically pay off in five, ten, or fifteen years any sum that may be borrowed, and in the event of previous death the purchased stock immediately becomes a part of the assured's estate.

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THE desire for a relief once in the week from the crushing materialism of the time, and from intellectual and spiritual starvation, has probably never been so keenly felt before, alike by soldiers on active service and by civilian workers at home; and there was never a greater need than that which exists to-day to revise and correct views and impressions got by hasty and desultory reading during the week.

It is the particular field and the duty of a weekly Review to aid the public in these directions. This is the constant aim of the SATURDAY REVIEW; and that it meets with wide approval is shown by the spontaneous remarks made from time to time in its Correspondence Columns.

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British Burmah Petroleum.

THE HON. LIONEL HOLLAND, presiding at the adjourned General Meeting of the British Burmah Petroleum Co., Ltd., held on Friday, 26 January, said that the outstanding feature of the year was a satisfactory expansion in revenue. Their trading profit showed an improvement of nearly £110,000 over that of the previous year. But their expanding earnings had been and were being counteracted by a serious increase in charges and expenditure, and it seemed clear that, so long as conditions of war prevailed, that handicap was more likely to be accentuated than reduced, rendering operations in every department of their business infinitely more costly and laborious. Although their trading balance was improved, it would have been still more favourable but for the enhanced cost of labour and of the proportion of material chargeable to revenue account. Moreover, it became necessary to devote to depreciation a larger slice out of their profits than would otherwise have been sufficient. There was a clear call for stricter caution in the disposal of their balance of profits, for the element of uncertainty must continue with the period of the war. But while giving full weight to such factors, the general results shown in the accounts were a subject for congratulation and encouragement. He was able to assure the shareholders a year ago that an improvement in the company's profits could safely be anticipated, and that forecast had been confirmed.

The profit and loss account showed a balance brought in from revenue account of nearly £253,000, against something over £143,000 last year. The increase was largely owing to the revised conditions assented to by the Burmah Oil Company—to their having waived the right of prior call over 1,500 barrels a day, leaving the production of their associated companies—the Kangoon Oil Company and the British Burmah Company—free to satisfy in the first instance the requirements of their refinery. Thus the output at the refinery, where the bulk of their profits was earned, amounted to 27,200,000 gallons, against 22,476,000 gallons for the previous year. The balance carried forward to the credit of the current year's accounts was nearly £11,000 in excess of the balance carried forward in the previous year. It could not be questioned that the business was altogether on a sounder financial footing than hitherto, and although he could offer no assurance of any further improvement while a state of war prevailed, yet he hoped that their increased revenue might at least be maintained during the war, and he believed they might expect a considerable measure of progress when more normal conditions returned. The directors were most anxious not to delay the moment when the company would join the goodly fellowship of dividend-paying concerns. They therefore proposed to pay an interim dividend for the first six months of the current year's working at the rate of 5 per cent. for the year.

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